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# New Perspectives on the Northampton Communion Controversy IV: Experience Mayhew's Dissertation on Edwards's *Humble Inquiry*

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*New Perspectives on the Northampton Communion Controversy IV:  
Experience Mayhew's Dissertation on Edwards's Humble Inquiry*

Douglas L. Winiarski

**Abstract**

This fourth installment in a series exploring newly discovered manuscripts relating to the “Qualifications Controversy” that drove Edwards from his Northampton pastorate presents an unpublished oppositional dissertation by Experience Mayhew, a prominent eighteenth-century Indian missionary from Martha’s Vineyard. Next to Solomon Stoddard, Mayhew was Edwards’s most important theological target during the conflict. Where Edwards pressed toward precision in defining the qualifications for admission to the Lord’s Supper, Mayhew remained convinced that the standards for membership in New England’s Congregational churches should encompass a broad range of knowledge and experience. His rejoinder to Edwards’s *Humble Inquiry* provides a rare opportunity to assess the ecclesiastical conflict as it reverberated outward from Northampton and the Connecticut Valley.

Although Jonathan Edwards’s evolving theology on the qualifications for church membership incited vigorous debate among his contemporaries, only a handful of sources shed light on the arguments advanced by his opponents. As early as 1745, Edwards and his colleagues debated the question of “Whether an Unregenerate Person has a Right in the Sight of God to the Lords Supper,” but the records of the Hampshire County ministerial association do not contain a summary of their deliberations. Nor did Longmeadow minister Stephen Williams comment on the dispute, even though he encountered several Northampton church members during the years following Edwards’s dismissal. “Conversation very much turns upon Mr. Edwards Dismission from Northampton,” noted Ebenezer Parkman while attending commencement exercises at Harvard College during the spring of 1750; yet his detailed diary remains silent on the substance of his discussions with the tutors, scholars, and graduates. Excepting Solomon Williams’s oppositional tract, *The True State of the Question Concerning the Qualifications Necessary to Lawful communion in the Christian Sacraments*, and a pair of sermons that Deerfield minister Jonathan Ashley delivered in Northampton in 1751, theological rejoinders to Edwards’s published defense of his restrictive new standards for church membership, *An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of the Word of God, Concerning the Qualifications Requisite to a Compleat Standing and Full Communion in the Visible Christian Church*, appear to have been in short supply.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hampshire Association Records, 1731-1747, Forbes Library, Northampton, Mass., 47; Stephen Williams, diaries, 1715-1782, 10 vols., typescript, Storrs Library, Longmeadow, Mass., 4:132, 182 (available online at

In the absence of detailed oppositional sources, most scholars have assumed that Edwards's arguments easily carried the day. Biographers from Perry Miller to George Marsden have relished the opportunity to recount how Edwards's ran Williams "through a meat grinder" and chopped his "arguments into splinters." But what do we really know about contemporary responses to Edwards's hastily written treatise during the years immediately following his dismissal from Northampton? To be sure, intellectual historians have recognized the cautious support that Edwards received from colleagues in Boston and eastern Massachusetts, as well as the unwanted accolades that *Humble Inquiry* received from New Light separatists, such as Ebenezer Frothingham of Middletown, Connecticut. During the next several decades, moreover, debates over the "halfway covenant" emerged among members of the Edwardsean New Divinity movement. Early in the conflict, Edwards declared to Boston minister Thomas Foxcroft that the "western part of New England is exceeding full of noise about this affair, and few are indifferent." But what were the theological arguments advanced by his opponents, especially ministers and lay people living beyond the Connecticut Valley?<sup>2</sup>

This essay presents a critical addition of a recently rediscovered manuscript dissertation written in opposition to Edwards's *Humble Inquiry* by Experience Mayhew. Although the prominent Martha's Vineyard Indian missionary has often played a key role in ethno-historical studies of native Americans in southern New England, his theological writings remain almost unknown. The few historians who have examined Mayhew's published sermons, theological tracts, and modest body of manuscripts have tended to dismiss him as a minor "Old Light" or early "Arminian" thinker whose principal importance lies in his role as the father of Jonathan Mayhew, one of the leading liberal theologians of the Revolutionary era.<sup>3</sup> A closer look at the elder Mayhew's contributions to the Northampton

<http://longmeadowlibrary.wordpress.com/>); *The Diary of Ebenezer Parkman, 1703-1782*, ed. Francis G. Walett (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1974), 218. For a summary of Williams's and Ashley's opposition, see David D. Hall, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 12:68-73.

<sup>2</sup> Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* ([New York]: William Sloane Associates, 1949), 222; George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003), 368; Jonathan Edwards to Thomas Foxcroft, May 24, 1749, *WJE*, 16:284. Studies that connect the intramural ecclesiastical conflicts of the New Divinity movement during the 1760s and 1770s with the Northampton communion controversy include Joseph A. Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins and the New Divinity Movement: Calvinism, the Congregational Ministry, and Reform in New England between the Great Awakenings* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1981), 76-94; and Mark Valeri, *Law & Providence in Joseph Bellamy's New England: The Origins of the New Divinity in Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 145-51. See also Christopher Grasso, "Misrepresentations Corrected: Jonathan Edwards and the Regulation of Religious Discourse," in *Jonathan Edwards's Writings: Text, Context, Interpretation*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 19-38.

<sup>3</sup> For discussions of Mayhew's theological writings, see Charles W. Akers, *Called unto Liberty: A Life of Jonathan Mayhew, 1720-1766* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964), 63-66; Gerald J. Goodwin,

communion controversy, however, suggests that his ecclesiology was closely aligned with that of his “catholick” colleagues in Boston and eastern Massachusetts. And he was a more formidable intellect: Mayhew would have “ranked among the first worthies of New England,” Charles Chauncy once wrote, “had he been favoured with common advantages of education.” Indeed, when Joseph Hawley, Edwards’s cousin and principal antagonist, retracted the “wicked Principles” of Arminianism to which he had subscribed during the Northampton controversy, he singled out Mayhew’s published writings as the “Most Dangerous” books of “any that I ever Saw.”<sup>4</sup>

Born on Martha’s Vineyard in 1673, Mayhew hailed from a distinguished family of proprietors, government officials, and Indian missionaries. Trained in the local Algonkian dialect at a young age, he began preaching among the several Wampanoag communities on Martha’s Vineyard in 1694. The following year, Mayhew married Thankful, the daughter Thomas Hinckley, the last governor of Plymouth Colony; following her death in 1706, he remarried Remember Bourne. Among his eight children, Jonathan achieved enduring fame as the minister of Boston’s West Church and Zechariah continued to serve the native churches of Martha’s Vineyard into the nineteenth century. For more than six decades until his death in 1758, Mayhew diligently worked among the island’s Indian communities as a lay preacher, catechist, school inspector, legal advocate, and liaison to the New England Company for the Propagation of the Gospel. Mayhew received an honorary master’s degree from Harvard College in 1723, translated the *Massachusetts Psalter: Or, Psalms of David with the Gospel According to John*, and published a several sermons, letters, and missionary tracts detailing the state of the Indian churches on Martha’s Vineyard.<sup>5</sup>

“The Myth of ‘Arminian Calvinism’ in Eighteenth-Century New England,” *New England Quarterly* 41 (1968): 236; Ava Chamberlain, “The Theology of Cruelty: A New Look at the Rise of Arminianism in Eighteenth-Century New England,” *Harvard Theological Review* 85 (1992): 354; and E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003), 84.

<sup>4</sup> John Eliot, *A Biographical Dictionary, Containing a Brief Account of the First Settlers, and Other Eminent Characters among the Magistrates, Ministers, Literary, and Worthy Men, in New-England* (Salem, Mass.: Cushing and Appleton, 1809), 319; Joseph Hawley, fragment of a confession, n.d. [ca. 1760s], Joseph Hawley Correspondence and Documents, 1751-1784, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, New York (available online at <http://archives.nypl.org/mss/23227>). See also John Corrigan, *The Prism of Piety: Catholick Congregational Clergy at the Beginning of the Enlightenment*, Religion in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>5</sup> Laura Arnold Leibman, ed., *Experience Mayhew’s Indian Converts: A Cultural Edition* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008), 4-17; William Kellaway, *The New England Company, 1649-1776: Missionary Society to the American Indians* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1975), 240-45; Charles Edward Banks, *The History of Martha’s Vineyard, Dukes County, Massachusetts*, 3 vols. (Edgartown, Mass.: Dukes County Historical Society, 1966), 3:305. Prominent ethnohistorical studies that draw upon Mayhew’s missionary writings include James P. Ronda, “Generations of Faith: The Christian Indians of Martha’s Vineyard,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 38 (1981): 369-94; E. Jennifer Monaghan, “She loved to read in good

Best known for its biographical sketches of notable native Christians, Mayhew's celebrated *Indian Converts* is an equally important text for understanding the ecclesiological positions that he articulated in his oppositional dissertation on Edwards's *Humble Inquiry*. At the time the book was published in London in 1727, the native churches on Martha's Vineyard continued to require prospective church membership candidates to make a "serious Profession of Faith and Repentance" in which they "professed Subjection to the Gospel of Christ." In fact, Mayhew would have submitted, or perhaps recited, such a profession when he joined one of the local Indian churches in full communion. Membership, however, was not contingent on candidates professing that they had experienced conversion. Instead, native Christians understood affiliation as an extension of their sacramental obligations to memorialize Christ's death at the Lord's Supper. For this reason, Mayhew's sketches in *Indian Converts* focused almost entirely on the subjects' "exemplary Conversation," or upright moral actions, rather than the state of their souls. He described an aged Wampanoag woman named Sarah, for example, as a "serious Professor of Religion" who never did anything "that was matter of Stumbling or Offence to the Church to which she join'd." Other prominent church members were "very constant and serious" in their "Attendance on, and Improvement of" the sacramental privileges to which they had been admitted; were never "guilty of any Fault that was just matter of Offence to God's People"; or "walked very blamelessly" from the time of their admission to full communion until their deaths.<sup>6</sup>

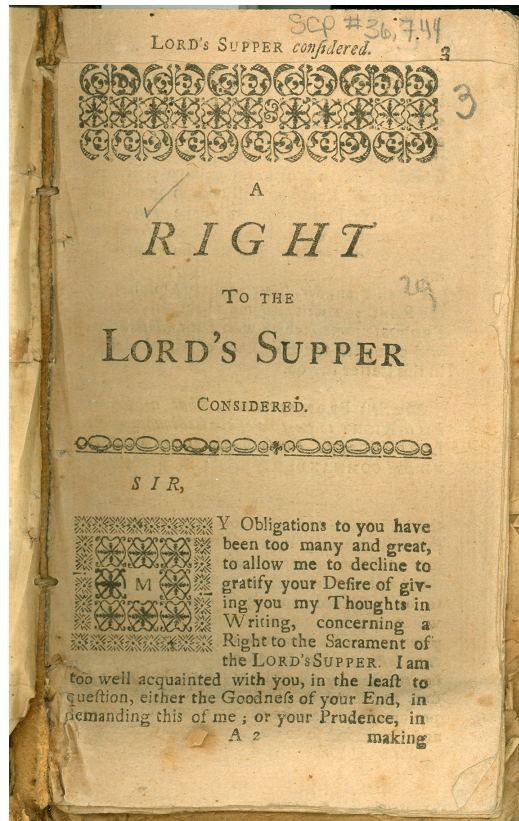
Like many congregations in southeastern Massachusetts, the Chilmark church to which Mayhew was dismissed in 1715 adhered to an unusually conservative set of admission standards well into the eighteenth century. Scattered entries from the diary of William

Books?: Literacy and the Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1643-1725," *History of Education Quarterly* 30 (1990): 492-521; Ann Marie Plane, *Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Early New England* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000), 96-128; Hilary E. Wyss, *Writings Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America*, Native Americans of the Northeast (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 52-80; Erik R. Seeman, "Reading Indians' Deathbed Scenes: Ethnohistorical and Representational Approaches," *Journal of American History* 88 (2001): 17-47; and David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871*, Studies in North American Indian History (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Leibman, ed., *Experience Mayhew's Indian Converts*, 124, 199, 219, 225, 234, 244, 257, 269. On church admission standards and the content of relations in eastern Massachusetts during the first half of the eighteenth century, see Douglas L. Winiarski, "Experiencing Conversion," in *A People's History of Christianity*, vol. 6, *Modern Christianity to 1900*, ed. Amanda Porterfield (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2007), 217-25; Winiarski, "Gendered 'Relations' in Haverhill, Massachusetts, 1719-1742," in Peter Benes, ed., *In Our Own Words: New England Diaries, 1600 to the Present*, vol. 1, *Diary Diversity, Coming of Age*, Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, Annual Proceedings 2006-2007 (Boston, 2009), 58-77; and Winiarski, "New Perspectives on the Northampton Communion Controversy II: Relations, Professions, & Experiences, 1748-1760," *JES* 4 (2014): 112-17.

Homes, the town's Scots-Irish minister, indicate that prospective communicants were required to observe a fortnight propounding period during which he carefully scrutinized their knowledge of Reformed theology and moral behavior. Candidates were then required to exhibit a written church admission testimony, or relation, in which they described their religious experiences. In addition, Homes's parishioners never adopted the extended baptismal practice of owning the covenant. As a result, church membership candidates in Chilmark tended to be older married men and women seeking the privilege of baptizing their children. Many of the more scrupulous members of the congregation brought their entire families for baptism—in some cases as many as seven children—shortly after their admission. In short, there is no evidence supporting the conclusion that Mayhew or the Chilmark church members with whom he worshipped for nearly a half a century were lax, liberal, or Stoddardean in their ecclesiological practices.<sup>7</sup>

An early formulation of Mayhew's ideas on church membership appeared in *Right to the Lord's Supper Considered*, an anonymous letter published in 1741 in which he exhorted all earnest "Disciples" of Christ to "partake of the Sacrament."



<sup>7</sup> Charles Edward Banks, ed., "Diary of Rev. William Homes of Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, 1689-1746," *New England Historic Genealogical Register* 49 (1895): 414, 416; 50 (1896): 163. On ecclesiastical conservatism among churches in southeastern Massachusetts, see Robert G. Pope, *The Half-Way Covenant: Church Membership in Puritan New England* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), 200-201, 204.

The Lord's Supper, he explained, was "one of the *positive Institutions* of Jesus Christ, which ought to be attended by all and only such, as God orders to attend it." Mayhew's argument, therefore, turned on the issue who was "*visibly qualified*" to receive the elements of bread and wine. To be sure, God's commands did not apply to the wicked. Atheists, infidels, "*gross Hypocrites*," and all "*self-righteous Persons*" who refused to repent of their sins or trust in God, Mayhew believed, should be excluded from communion. At the same time, all pious men and women who remained mired in "IN AN UNREGENERATE *State*" were nonetheless obliged to participate in the sacrament. No one should be "DEBARRED *from coming to the Lord's Supper*," Mayhew asserted, "*on the Account of their WANTING the Grace of REGENERATION, or because they are not yet born again.*"<sup>8</sup>

Mayhew stopped short of describing the Lord's Supper as a "*Converting Ordinance*," as Edwards's grandfather had done a quarter century earlier, but he espoused a similar developmental ecclesiology in *Right to the Lord's Supper Considered*. In fact, he buttressed his position by citing the "judicious Mr. Stoddard" and his controversial 1708 pamphlet, *The Inexcusableness of Neglecting the Worship of God, Under a Pretence of Being in an Unconverted Condition*. The category of a "DISCIPLE," Mayhew continued, was synonymous with a "*Learner or Scholar*," by which he meant anyone who was committed to the "Way of the Gospel." "At Present, I say, that a *Disciple* of Jesus Christ, is one who submits himself to his Instruction, and endeavours to learn of him, and be obedient to him," he explained. It was the duty of all "*morally sincere*" Christians who made a "good Profession" of their beliefs and earnestly strived to put those beliefs into practice to partake of the Lord's Supper. During the same months that George Whitefield and Gilbert Tennent thundered on the necessity of conversion during their celebrated preaching tours of New England, Mayhew was busy at his desk, setting aside the issue of regeneration as a term of communion and emphasizing, instead, duty, practice, and outward behavior in his sacramental theology.<sup>9</sup>

Mayhew was not an outspoken opposer of the Whitefieldian revivals—at least not initially. Like Edwards and many of their contemporaries, Mayhew approached the Great Awakening with a sense of anticipation. Writing to a colleague during the summer of 1741, he took stock of the declining state of religion among the native Christians of Martha's Vineyard, whom he described as being "very slack in their Attendance on God's publick

<sup>8</sup> [Experience Mayhew], *Right to the Lord's Supper Considered in a Letter to a Serious Enquirer after Truth* (Boston: John Draper, 1741), 2-4, 7-8, 12, 17-18. The *Boston Evening-Post* advertised Mayhew's "Just published" pamphlet on Feb. 9, 1741, at the height of Gilbert Tennent's preaching tour of New England. See also Milton J. Coalter, Jr., *Gilbert Tennent, Son of Thunder: A Case Study of Continental Pietism's Impact on the First Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies*, Contributions to the Study of Religion, 18 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986), 55-89.

<sup>9</sup> Solomon Stoddard, *The Inexcusableness of Neglecting the Worship of God, Under a Pretence of Being in an Unconverted Condition* (Boston: Benjamin Green, 1708), 25; [Mayhew], *Right to the Lord's Supper Considered*, 4, 12-14.

Worship.” “I am waiting and longing for the Time when the Spirit from on high will, I hope, be poured down on these miserable Indians as well as other Nations,” Mayhew concluded. Less than a year later, he dispatched a hurried letter Thomas Foxcroft in Boston describing the “deep *Concern*” that had suddenly gripped the Indian and English settlements on the island. During the intervening months, several “mightily awakened” young men had returned to Martha’s Vineyard after witnessing powerful revival events in Eleazar Wheelock’s parish in Lebanon, Connecticut. They established prayer meetings in their homes and invited itinerant preachers from the mainland, including the fiery Josiah Crocker of Taunton, Massachusetts, to preside over powerful late night meetings. Scores of new church members swelled the ranks of the churches in Edgartown, Tisbury, and Chilmark. By March 1742, news of “a Revival of Religion at the Vine Yard” had reached Mayhew’s son, Jonathan, in Boston. But while the younger Mayhew greeted the news with unrestrained joy, his father remained circumspect. Like many of his contemporaries, Mayhew questioned the conversion experiences of men and women who “seem utterly to loose the exercise of their reason” and “can hardly carry themselves Decently in Time of Publick worship.” His ministerial colleagues on the island remained divided over the revivals. “For my own part,” Mayhew concluded, “I cannot see but that the work may, for the substance of it, be a real work of God, tho it should be supposed that their may be some Instances of persons under counterfit Operations.”<sup>10</sup>

By the time that Whitefield returned in 1744 to begin his second preaching tour of New England, however, Mayhew had changed his opinion. During the intervening years, ministers and their congregations had been roiled by increasingly rancorous disputes over a wide range of issues, including the nature of conversion, the possibility of continued revelation, the authenticity of bodily exercises, and the authority of college-educated ministers. Fueled by the incendiary public ministries of touring evangelists such as James Davenport and Andrew Crowell, the first trickle in what quickly became a flood of disaffected lay men and women began to withdraw from communion in the churches of the standing order. Within a few years, seething popular dissent had precipitated dozens of church schisms, as lay men and women hived off into separate and, later, separate Baptist congregations. In contrast to Edwards, who struggled to correct what he perceived to be the errors and excesses of the revivals in his published treatises, *The Distinguishing Marks of a*

<sup>10</sup> Experience Mayhew to an unnamed clergyman, July 20, 1741, no. 11, Mayhew Papers, 1648-1774, Mark and Lloria Bortman Collection, Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston University, Boston; Mayhew to Thomas Foxcroft, May 18, 1742, box 1, folder 10, Thomas Foxcroft Correspondence, 1729-1759, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library, Princeton, N.J.; Ross W. Beales, Jr., ed., “‘Our Hearts Are Traitors to Themselves’: Jonathan Mayhew and the Great Awakening,” *Bulletin of the Congregational Library*, 1st Ser., 37, no. 3 (Spring/Summer 1976), 8.



*Work of the Spirit of God and Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New-England*, Mayhew eventually rejected the Great Awakening altogether.<sup>11</sup>

Mayhew joined many of his ministerial colleagues in laying the blame for New England's growing ecclesiastical divisions squarely at Whitefield's feet. Privately, Edwards harbored similar misgivings. In an unpublished letter to Boston minister Thomas Foxcroft, Mayhew roundly condemned Whitefield's popular autobiography, in which the Anglican evangelist claimed to possess infallible assurance of his divine election following a series of sudden illuminations. The Martha's Vineyard missionary criticized Whitefield not only for his arrogance in comparing his experiences with those of Jesus on the cross but also for subverting the Calvinist doctrine of unconditional election. He went so far as to suggest that the touring revivalist had been "miserably deceived" by "*Satanical Delusions*." As a young man studying at Oxford College, Whitefield had too easily hearkened to "*Secret Whisperings*" and "*Sudden Motions, Impulses, & Dreams*," Mayhew asserted, assuming that they were certain evidence of the "*Movings of the Spirit of God*" on his heart. If left unchallenged, Mayhew concluded, Whitefield's immensely popular biography would inevitably "harden many in their Sins" and exacerbate the ecclesiastical divisions that were already splintering New England's Congregational establishment.<sup>12</sup>

By the early 1750s, Mayhew, like Edwards, had turned his attention to a wide range of theological controversies. His speculative writings on the nature of the trinity might have been entirely conventional by the standards of his time, but Mayhew's critique of Calvinist notions of election, predestination, and free will struck out in a decisively liberal direction. Early in his career, Mayhew had published a sermon in which he argued that God dealt with humanity as "Reasonable Creatures" by endowing his most exalted creation with elevated mental faculties and providing a fair and just system for adjudicating their salvation at the "*Great Assize or Day of Judgment*." He expanded on this idea in *Grace Defended*, a pugnacious treatise written during the heated years of the Whitefieldian revivals. Against the extreme position on free will advanced by "*Calvinists*" such as the New Jersey clergyman Jonathan Dickinson, Mayhew contended that God offered salvation conditionally to all sinners. It was illogical, he argued, to presume that the unregenerate were incapable of performing the "Condition on which Salvation is offered" unless they were "first converted and born of the Spirit." Original sin may have dimmed the faculties of God's fallen "free Agents," Mayhew

<sup>11</sup> See Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 117-55, 174-88.

<sup>12</sup> [Experience Mayhew], "A Letter to a Minister of the Gospel containing some *Queries* on several Passages in the Reverend Mr. *George Whitefield's* account of his own Life, Published in the Year 1740," n.d. [ca. mid-1740s], no. 8, Mayhew Family, 3, 6, 8, 12-14. For Edwards's reservations about Whitefield's itinerant ministry, see Ava Chamberlain, "The Grand Sower of the Seed: Jonathan Edwards's Critique of George Whitefield," *New England Quarterly* 70 (1997): 368-85.

concluded, but it did not, as Dickinson and many other contemporaries believed, make it impossible for humanity to respond to the gracious promise of salvation.<sup>13</sup>

The impact of Mayhew's liberal soteriology on his ideas regarding the proper standards of church membership is especially evident in an undated treatise on the "Covenant of Grace," which he likely wrote later in the 1740s. Unlike the covenant of redemption, which had been sealed at the dawn of time among the persons of the trinity, the covenant of grace was established between the "Blessed and holy God and some of the fallen and sinful Children of Men." God set the terms of the contract, Mayhew explained, promising to "bestow Eternal Life and blessedness on All those with whom he Enters into Covenant and that on certain Conditions required of them, and unto the Performance whereof they give their consent." Mayhew recognized that enacting the covenant of grace involved a complex process. Salvation was an unmerited gift from God, yet Mayhew nonetheless maintained that "Some things are immedialy required of sinners" while "they are in an unregenerate state": performing devotional duties, attending public worship exercises, obeying divine law, and developing a "Historical or Temporary Faith" through the diligent study of the scriptures. None of the "reasonable and Easie" terms of the covenant of grace, Mayhew concluded, reprising his earlier arguments in *Right to the Lord's Supper Considered and Grace Defended*, presupposed that sinners already possessed saving faith. They were necessary "in order to the beginning of the applycation of Redemtion."<sup>14</sup>

Mayhew believed that God required humanity to ratify their part of the covenant of grace "both by their words and by the sacraments." By the end of his short treatise, Mayhew had arrived at the conclusion that the saints were obliged to "give a verbal consent" to the terms of the covenant of grace by joining the church in full communion and participating in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper "before God begins effectually to save them." Conversion, he concluded, was not a necessary term of communion, nor was it the quality that candidates were required to make visible at the time of their affiliation:

If a convinced and awakened sinner [do] profess that he is perswaded of the reallity of Great Truths that are revealed in the scriptures, and that it is absolutly necessary in order to his Eternal happyness that he live according to the precepts and Rules therein contained, and is resolved that by the Grace of God assisting of them he will do so, waiting upon God in a way of duty for the powering out of his holy spirit upon him, for his Effectual calling or convection, tho the sinner does not herein profess that he is already converted, & that he is so; yet even by such a profession as this now mentioned the person intended brings himself under covenant obligations to serve the Lord, and doubtless those who make such a Profession ought to be

<sup>13</sup> Experience Mayhew, *A Discourse Shewing That God Dealeth with Men as with Reasonable Creatures* (Boston: Benjamin Green, 1720), 14-15; Mayhew, *Grace Defended, in a Modest Plea for an Important Truth* (Boston: Benjamin Green, 1744), 196, 198. For Mayhew's exchange with Dickinson, see Akers, *Called Unto Liberty*, 64-65; and Bryan F. Le Beau, *Jonathan Dickinson and the Formative Years of American Presbyterianism* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 162-64.

<sup>14</sup> Experience Mayhew, "Covenant of Grace," n.d. [late 1740s], Experience Mayhew Papers, [1, 3-8, 13].

admitted into the visible church and treated as members of it and as under solemn covenant engagements to serve the Lord.

“Consent unto the *Covenant of Grace*” through a profession of faith that led to church membership was a precondition for salvation, he concluded, even if “*it does not Imply Regeneration.*”<sup>15</sup>

Edwards owned copies of Mayhew’s published works, and he circulated them among his ministerial supporters during the communion controversy in order to expose and combat their errors. In the theological notebooks that he compiled as he prepared to write *Humble Inquiry*, moreover, he singled out Mayhew’s arguments regarding “moral sincerity” for sustained criticism. But when Edwards attacked *Right to the Lord’s Supper Considered* in his published response to Solomon Williams, Mayhew was spurred to action.<sup>16</sup> During the fall of 1755, the aging missionary set to work composing his own response to the controversy. But at 84 years of age, with his hands shaking and his eyes failing, Mayhew found it difficult to write. Hastily composed and poorly copied by a local scribe, his rambling dissertation is difficult to read; but it nonetheless remains a crucial source for understanding the opposition to Edwards’s evolving ecclesiology that developed among ministers and educated lay people outside of the Connecticut Valley.

Mayhew limited his rebuttal to the first argument in *Humble Inquiry*. “It Seems to Me,” he asserted in the conclusion, that Edwards’s entire argument would “Either Stand or fall According to his Success in that part of his Book which I have taken under Serious Consideration.” The “Main Busines” of Edwards’s position on the qualifications for church membership, Mayhew believed, was to “make good an assertion in wh[ich] he affirms that the churchs of christ ought’nt to admit any into their communion but such as are in appearanc & truly Godly” or, as he wrote later, “in A Regenerate State.” The slippage between these two categories was crucial to the missionary’s argument. After all, Edwards had categorically rejected the criticism that he required candidates for church membership to prove that they had experienced conversion. But scattered evidence from Mayhew’s dissertation suggests that he, like many others, continued to believe—whether accurately or not—that this was, indeed, the “Import” or “true state” of Edwards’s position. “The Sum of the Matter,” Mayhew concluded, was “that Mr. Edwards holds that No Person is really and in the Sight of God quallified for full Communion in the Visible Church who is Not Savingly Converted and in A State of Salvation and Consequently that none but what are

<sup>15</sup> Mayhew, “Covenant of Grace,” [6-8, 13].

<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Edwards, “Account Book,” WJE 26:340; Edwards, “Sacrament Book I,” n.d. [ca. 1749-1750], WJEO 38, [38]; Edwards, *Misrepresentations Corrected, and Truth Vindicated* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1752), WJE 12:371.

Visibly or in Appearance Such ought by the Church of Christ to be Admitted into her Communion.”<sup>17</sup>

Mayhew then turned his attention to Edwards’s definition of “visible” sainthood. In contrast to Edwards’s argument that candidates needed to profess that they were “visibly converted and gracious persons,” Mayhew argued that “Person[s] may Profess Subjection to the Gosple, who do not Make So high a Profession.” Infusing his argument with stock phrases common to church admission testimonies from towns throughout eastern Massachusetts, the missionary maintained that all candidates should be required to profess their knowledge of correct doctrine, their willingness to submit to church discipline, their acceptance of sacramental duties, and their desire to strive toward holiness in heart and life. Reprising his argument in *Grace Defended*, Mayhew concluded that a profession of this “lower Kind” was the “Great Condition of the Covenant of Grace.” It came first in the order of salvation and, thus, did not require candidates to affirm that they had been “Savingly Converted.” According to Mayhew, church membership standards ought to be “Proportionable” to the limited spiritual attainments of God’s flawed saints. “Rational Souls” made visible a “Federal and Relative Holiness” in which they affirmed the truth of the gospel and pledged to walk answerable to their professions. Since church membership was only a volitional act—a work of “Common grace” and a “good Preparative”—Mayhew recognized that many of Christ’s professed saints, believers, and disciples would inevitably “fall Short of the Prize.”<sup>18</sup>

In the third section of his dissertation, Mayhew countered Edwards’s arguments in which the Northampton clergyman denigrated “moral sincerity” as a “meer Evasion.” According to Mayhew, Edwards’s efforts to distinguish “true” and “real” saints from evangelical hypocrites—to square the “sign” with the “thing signified,” as he explained elsewhere in *Humble Inquiry*—had no basis in the scriptures. All reasonable divines readily acknowledged that “there are two Sorts of People in the Visible Church,” Mayhew explained. He cited the examples of notorious biblical “Apostates,” such as Judas and Simon Magus, both of whom had experienced a “Real Change” when they professed their belief in Christ and yet eventually fell away. Likewise, Paul addressed his epistles to all the “Brethren” at Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. Surely, Mayhew quipped, Edwards did not presume that “Whole Churches” were comprised exclusively of men and women in a “Regenerate State.” Indeed, many of the most commonly cited biblical metaphors for church membership seemed to indicate the opposite. After all, Mayhew reasoned, the “Prudent Husbandman” (Christ) in Matthew 13 instructed his servants to allow the wheat

<sup>17</sup> Experience Mayhew, dissertation on Jonathan Edwards’s *Humble Inquiry*, n.d. [ca. 1755], Thomas Foxcroft Correspondence, 1729-1759, 39, 53, 73, [73a], MS 0160, box 1, folder 13, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.; Mayhew, fragmentary draft of dissertation on Jonathan Edwards’s *Humble Inquiry*, n.d. [ca. 1755], inserted into “Humane Liberty,” 1752, Experience Mayhew Papers, 1714-1755, Ms. N-539, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

<sup>18</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, 12:183-84; Mayhew, dissertation, 36-37, 42-44, 49, 51.

(regenerate) and the tares (apostates) to “grow Together in the field” (the church) until the “Harvest” (Day of Judgment). Both groups of virgins in Matthew 25—one of Edwards’s favorite preaching texts—possessed lamps (professions of religion), although the foolish women eventually failed in “Due course to Provide themselves with the Oyl they needed” (saving grace). Even the “Stony Ground hearers” in the Parable of the Sower possessed a certain kind of faith, at least for a time. In all of these examples, which Mayhew believed he interpreted “Strictly According to their literal sense,” the aging Indian missionary attempted to stitch together what Edwards’s had torn asunder in *Humble Inquiry*: the imperfect church as it was in the world from what it “Should be *Hereafter*.”<sup>19</sup>

Mayhew’s argument differed in important ways from “Mr. *Stoddards* Opinion and way of Managing the Controversy,” an issue that he carefully sidestepped in his dissertation. Mayhew never claimed that the Lord’s Supper was a converting ordinance. Instead, his position resonated with the broad standards for church membership employed in the English and Indian churches on Martha’s Vineyard and throughout eastern Massachusetts. Like many Congregational ministers, Mayhew recognized that a “Sort of Holiness of a Lower kind” was “Necessary in Order to Church Communion.” He called it “*Moral Sincerity*.” Mayhew feared that any other standard—including those advocated by Edwards—would exacerbate the ecclesiastical controversies that had polarized New England’s Congregational establishment during years following the Whitefieldian revivals.<sup>20</sup>

In the end, Mayhew’s critique of Edwards’s *Humble Inquiry* never moved beyond a preliminary draft. He sent the completed manuscript to a “scribe” who produced a copy so “unskillfully done” and riddled with errors, that Mayhew felt “*ashamed to expose it to veiw*.” Mayhew attempted to correct his dissertation but eventually laid the project aside in the face of his poor health, fading eyesight, and shaky hands. He eventually forwarded the disorganized manuscript to Thomas Foxcroft, hoping that the prominent Boston clergyman and publicist might find an “Abler Hand” to improve his “broken & confused Thoughts.” There is no evidence that his dissertation circulated widely or that Foxcroft forwarded it to Edwards in Northampton. Nor was it ever printed. “Scarse any will be at the charge of printing anything written by so old a man as I am,” Mayhew noted glumly in a letter to Foxcroft, “especially against an opinion of so great a Man as Mr. Edwards, tho one Liable to mistakes.” Still, Mayhew’s dissertation serves as an important reminder that Edwards’s

<sup>19</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, 12:191-92, 316; Mayhew, dissertation, 38, 51, 54-55, 57, 59, 63-64, 66. For Edwards’s sermons on Matthew 25, see also Ava Chamberlain, “Brides of Christ and Signs of Grace: Edwards’s Sermon Series on the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins,” in *Jonathan Edwards’s Writings: Text, Context, Interpretation*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 3-18; and *Sermons by Jonathan Edwards on the Matthean Parables*, vol. 1, *True and False Christians (On the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins)*, ed. Kenneth P. Minkema, Adriaan C. Neele, and Bryan McCarthy (Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books, 2012).

<sup>20</sup> Mayhew, dissertation, 45-46.

controversial writings on church admission practices did not sweep all contenders from the field.<sup>21</sup>

Why was Edwards, arguably the most celebrated minister in eighteenth-century New England, removed from his pastorate in Northampton? Most scholars have looked beyond the terms of the qualifications debate for answers—to persisting social tensions, changing gender norms, or declining religious and moral standards. But the terms of the debate were far from arcane or irrelevant. The newly discovered texts presented in this series provide fresh insight into one of the most pressing ecclesiastical debates of the period. Edwards’s writings during the controversy, including *Humble Inquiry*, *Misrepresentations Corrected*, his weekly lectures, and correspondence on the subject incited his most ardent supporters—ministers such as David Hall of Sutton and Edward Billing of Cold Spring (now Belchertown), Massachusetts—to adopt similar measures in their own churches. But they also puzzled more moderate colleagues, such as Ebenezer Parkman of Westborough, Massachusetts, and Thomas Prince of Boston; and they emboldened emerging radical New Lights, including the men and women of Granville and Chebacco, Massachusetts. Indeed, the communion controversy reveals an Edwards profoundly out of step with his contemporaries. All New England ministers—Edwards and his opponents included—were “fully Agreed” that “Churches Ought to Admitt none into their Communion but Such as by Sufficient Evidence Appear to be truly Godly persons,” Mayhew concluded, “but what that Evidence is they cannot at all Agree.”<sup>22</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

Mayhew’s dissertation on Jonathan Edwards’s *Humble Inquiry* originally consisted of “two Parts or sections” that were “stitched together,” owing to the “Different size of the sheets.”<sup>23</sup> The first half of the manuscript has not survived, with the exception of a short fragment of Mayhew’s preliminary draft. This single folded leaf was later inserted into the missionary’s 1752 manuscript treatise on “Humane Liberty,” which may be found among the Experience Mayhew Papers, 1714–1755 (Ms. N-539), at the Massachusetts Historical Society. The complete second half of Mayhew’s dissertation is part of the Thomas Foxcroft Correspondence, 1729–1759 (MS 0160), box 1, folder 13, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton University. Two supporting letters to Foxcroft follow. The first, dated February 21, 1755, is in the Foxcroft Correspondence, box 1, folder 10; the second, dated March 5, 1756, may be found among the Thomas Foxcroft Papers in the Mark and Lloria Bortman Collection at the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research

<sup>21</sup> Mayhew, dissertation, cover; Mayhew to Thomas Foxcroft, Feb. 21, 1755, Foxcroft Correspondence, box 1, folder 10; Mayhew to Foxcroft, March 5, 1756, Foxcroft Papers.

<sup>22</sup> Mayhew, dissertation, 31.

<sup>23</sup> Mayhew to Foxcroft, March 5, 1756, Foxcroft Papers.

Center at Boston University. All four manuscripts are published in their entirety by the generous permission of these institutions.

The second half of Mayhew's dissertation comprises thirteen leaves, folded to form pages approximately 15.5 cm wide by 19.5 cm tall, stacked, wrapped in a coarse brown paper cover, and sewn together. Mayhew initially numbered these pages from 17 to 62. In his corrections, Mayhew crossed out page 17 and half of page 18; and he renumbered the entire manuscript from 31 to 75. The author's signature, which appears on the final page, has been cancelled. Mayhew's correspondence with Foxcroft suggests that he was frustrated by the quality of the transcription produced by the "scribe" or "Friend" who initially agreed to draft a fair copy of his "broken & confused" original. Mayhew was in his early eighties at the time he took up his pen. With his vision dimmed and "head and hand grown very weak," he clearly struggled to produce a legible text. Mayhew's prose is unpolished and awkward; the entire manuscript, moreover, is almost entirely devoid of punctuation. As he explained in a letter to Foxcroft, Mayhew did not intend for the dissertation to appear in print. Instead, he encouraged the Boston minister to circulate the text privately after it had been "set in order by an Abler Hand."<sup>24</sup>

In preparing these four manuscripts for publication, therefore, I have generally followed the expanded method of transcription described in Mary-Jo Kline, *A Guide to Documentary Editing*, 2d ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 157-58, 161-64, and Samuel Eliot Morison, "Care and Editing of Manuscripts," in *The Harvard Guide to American History*, ed. Frank Freidel, 2 vols., rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974), 1:28-31. I have provided concluding punctuation, capitalized the first words of sentences, and, in some cases, supplied missing punctuation, especially for quotations. I have silently expanded all abbreviations and modernized archaic English thorns throughout. Periods appear after abbreviations in common usage during the eighteenth century (e.g. "Mr.," "Viz.," "i.e."), as well as after numbered headings. Like Edwards, Mayhew often included a long string of scriptural citations to support his arguments. I have set off these citations using periods or commas in a manner generally consistent with eighteenth-century typesetting practices. I have incorporated Mayhew's minor revisions without comment, while glossing substantial changes to the original manuscript in the notes. Square brackets identify grossly misspelled or missing words and other minor scribal errors, as well as illegible words and conjectural readings. Mayhew's corrected page numbers appears between slashes. Mayhew inserted two slips of paper bearing significant corrections; and he inadvertently numbered page 73 twice. These pages have been identified with the letter "a" (e.g. /32a/ and /73a/). Overall, I have attempted to present an edition of Mayhew's dissertation that remains faithful to his hastily copied and corrected final draft, while enhancing the readability of the text for a modern audience.

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<sup>24</sup> Mayhew, dissertation, cover; Mayhew to Foxcroft, March 5, 1756, Foxcroft Papers.

Experience Mayhew, Dissertation on Jonathan Edwards's *Humble Inquiry* (fragmentary draft of Part 1), n.d. [ca. 1755]

It will also follow from thence that with saving holyness none are qualified *in the sight of God*, for full comunion in christs visible church and this (I also think to be evident) for he knows may admit none into [there] but such as appear pious or Godly. The reason of this must need be because ungodly persons are not qualified in the sight or Judgment of [charity] for church communion. Mr. Edwards therefore makes it the Main Business of Humble Enquiry to make good an assertion in wh[ich] he affirms that the churchs of christ ought'nt to admit any into their comunion but such as are in appearanc & truly Godly or Pious knowing that the [proof] of this will as well answer his End as if [he had] instead [there] shew [as] asserted it [unlawfull] for an unconverted persons to offer themselves to the church of christ. And I would here observe that this, now [mentioned] true [*illeg.*] the truth of the Antecedent depends upon its being a truth [th]at unconverted persons are not in the sight [of God] fit for church comunion tho this Truth may appear by Gods forbiding his churchs to receive as are not in apperance true saints.

However it will satisfie me If Mr. Edwards proves well that churches may admit none into their comunion but such as are in appearance truly Godly persons and for that reason viz. because this is the very [thing] that qualifies them for it, as he holds, and affirms. And Mr. Edwards that he may make go[o]d [affects], does affirm that it is not only held forth in scripture but generally agreed unto by Divines that vissible saints are the proper Matter of the vissible Church. And this being asserted he proceeds to endeavour to make it appear that by visible saints such must needs be intended as are in appearance, and to a Judgment of Christian Charity real saints or truly Godly persons such as shall be [certainly] Eternally saved. And here Mr. Edwards saies much upon the word Vissible and vissibility endeavouring so to explain as in his [expresion] will give countenance to what he asserts in the sixth and 8 page[s] of his mentioned Book<sup>25</sup> and I shall endeavour duely to consider what he has said in that [which] I think to be the most proper place for it, when I come to it. Here I would only further[r] say That, Tho I think there are several things that are exceptionable in the Manner in which Mr. Edwards has proposed what he undertakes to prove yet because I would only concern myself with what I think I have occasion to consider and that being as I think fairly laid before us, I shall not trouble my reader with any which I think I may [leave] the consideration of.

The [*illeg.*] as before is then is whether the church of christ [must] admit into her comunion any that are not in appear[an]ce and [to the a] Judgment of well grounded Christian Charity truly pious, or Godly persons. This being I suppose the true state of the Question now to be disputed, & I acknowledg myself to be for the affirmative [proof] and

<sup>25</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:179-80, 182.



suppose Mr. Edwards to be for the negative, according to what undertaken to make Good in the Mentioned pages.

Ephesians 4:30.<sup>26</sup>

These words have 2 parts

1 an Exhortation And Grieve Not &c.

2 [blank]

Experience Mayhew in his writing by hand Shakes more & more Every year.

Experience Mayhew his writing &c.

Experience Mayhew, Dissertation on Jonathan Edwards's *Humble Inquiry* (Part 2), n.d. [ca. 1755]

My scribe would not allow me a Margin to stitch notwithstanding all that I could say.<sup>27</sup>

/31/[. . .] Thoughts are with Relation to God as Whether this or that Man be Endowed with the Invisible graces of the Holy Spirit Such as Saving Faith Repentance and true Love to God &c. and it is Supposed that these things can be in Some Sort Discerned by what a man Says and does, Yea So plainly as that the Church may Ground her Judgment upon Such a Discovery in A very Important Case viz. Whether Such a Person must be Admitted into the Church of the Saints or excluded from it. A Case in which if the Church be Mistaken and give A wrong Judgment She will greatly Injure the Person Offering himself and be themselves therein guilty of A great Sin. I think that Churches that are in this way Undertake a very Difficult Matter. (3) It does not Appear that God has given unto his Churches any Certain Rule to Judge by in this Difficult Case now mean, Whether there be Sufficient Evidence to Judge this or that man to be in a Regenerate State or Not. Men that are for this Scheme are Therefore far from being Agreed what Evidence is Sufficient for this purpose. Mr. *Edwards* and Mr. *Williams* are fully Agreed in this that Churches Ought to Admitt none into their Communion but Such as by Sufficient Evidence Appear to be truly Godly persons but what that Evidence is they cannot at all Agree, as does plainly Appear by

<sup>26</sup> Mayhew inscribed these incomplete scriptural notes and introspective musings on the state of his health upside down in the blank space at the end of the manuscript.

<sup>27</sup> Written by Mayhew on the cover of the manuscript.

their writings. Mr. *Edwards* holds that to this End the Candidate for Church Communion must Profess himself to be Savingly Converted but Mr. *Williams* thinks Otherwise.<sup>28</sup> Nor have those that are wholly in Mr. *Edwards* way of Thinking, Yet Agreed upon any Rule by which Churches may Judge who ought to be looked Upon as Converted Persons and who not and therefore those who are to Judge in this Case are very Apt to be Divided in their Judgments And this Sometimes occasions no little Trouble. (4) The difficulty with Which this Matter is Attended Ariseth very Much from the Variety of Degrees of Evidence which there may be Supposed to be /32/ in the Case. I think I may Say that they are Numberless to be sure. There is Such a variety of them that it is hard to fix on that which is needfull in the Case. I cannot Easily Name the lowest of them. Perhaps Some may think thus Such one is a Child of Godly parents and as Such are Under very Gracious Promises and they have Seen No Wickedness in him and So hope he is a seriously Pious Person. Others may think thus we See Such a one Seems to Attend the Solemn Worship of God and we hope he is a Godly Person For Charity believes all things and hopes all things. 1 Corinthians 13:17. And there Are Innumerable Other things that are Some grounds for Charity to persons. Now on which of these we Should fix as that Needful in the Case we are not Duly Informed. I Suppose Scarce Any hold the highest Evidences to be required and the lowest will hardly Answer the End, and the Question must be which of the Intermediate ones is the right. That the lowest that will do Should be known, must Needs be very Necessary because Otherwise [the] Church will be in great Danger of Admitting Such into their Communion as are not Qualified for it in the Eye of Christian Charity and of Excluding others from it who are fit for it, which they will do them very great wrong. This therefore is A Point that needs to be very Well Cleared Up Which how well Mr. *Edwards* has performed I Leave his Readers to Judge. It does not appear to me to be well done.<sup>29</sup>

/32a/ Having thus answered to Mr. *Edwards* first Argument as far as the End of the 14 page of his Book, what followeth to about the middle of his 16 page, being what I think myself very Litle concerned in, I Shall omit saying anything upon it,<sup>30</sup> and come to what he there enters upon, *viz.* to shew that Hypothesis which I acknowledg that I do favour to be a mere *Evasion* and altogether indefensible the same being a continuation of what he *has said in his Defence of his first Argument.*<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Mayhew was referring the arguments advanced in Solomon Williams, *The True State of the Question Concerning the Qualifications Necessary to Lawful Communion in the Christian Sacraments* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1751); and Edwards, *Misrepresentations Corrected*, WJE 12:351-503. For a summary of the debate, see Hall, "Editor's Introduction," WJE 12:68-77.

<sup>29</sup> Last sentence added by Mayhew.

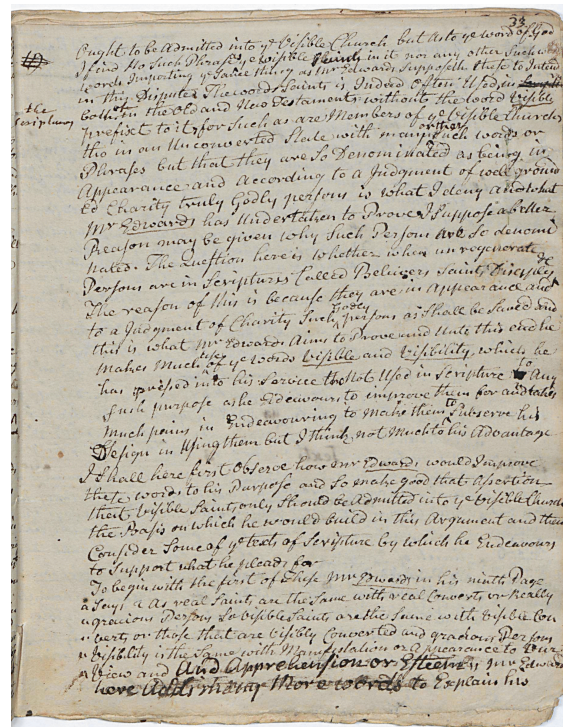
<sup>30</sup> See Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:189-92.

<sup>31</sup> Mayhew deleted the previous page and a half of the manuscript, presumably because he had copied this text into the (now lost) first part of the manuscript, which he bound separately. Then, he crossed out the first sentence of the next paragraph, which read "~~Having Now finished what I Intended in the first general Head of my Discourse,~~" and inserted this introductory paragraph on a small slip of paper. The small leaf, which

And <sup>32</sup>/I Shall proceed to the Next, viz.

Section II Wherein I Shall Consider the Sum of what Mr. Edwards has Said in his first Argument to Make good What he Affirms. Now what Mr. Edwards Endeavours to Prove is that Churches Ought not to Admitt any into their Communion but Such as are in Appearance and According to a Judgment of well grounded Charity in A Regenerate State. And I intend in this<sup>32</sup> Section to Consider the Sum of what he Says<sup>33</sup> in his argument to make this good.

Thus then Mr. Edwards Enters upon his first Argument “I begin with Observing I think it is both Evident from the word of God and Also granted on all hands that None ought to be Admitted as Members of the Visible Church of Christ but Visible Saints and Professing Saints Or Visible and Professing Christians.”<sup>34</sup> To what is thus far Said I Say I think it is Indeed generally Acknowledged Among Us, that Visible Saints are the only proper matter of Visible Churches, And that Consequently None but Such <sup>33</sup>/



measures 17.5 by 7.5 cm, bears the following inscription at the bottom: “Read this in pag 32 (after the words And well done).” Written sideways in the margin: “This must be read in page 32 (after the words Well done).”

<sup>32</sup> Mayhew deleted the words “And I intend in this” and then rewrote them in the margin.

<sup>33</sup> Mayhew deleted the words “before [illeg.] comes to [illeg.] in the third Section is to be Taken Under Consideration” and inserted the words “in his argument to make this good.”

<sup>34</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE, 12:182.

Ought to be Admitted into the Visible Church. But As to the word of God I find No Such Phrase as the Visible Saints in it nor any other Such words Importing the Same thing as Mr. Edwards Supposeth these to Intend in this Dispute. The word Saints is Indeed Often Used, in the Scriptures both of in the Old and New Testament without the word *Visible* prefix to it, for Such as are Members of the Visible Church, though in an Unconverted State with many orther Such words or Phrases. But that they are So Denominated as being in Appearance and According to a Judgment of well grounded Charity truly Godly persons is what I deny And what Mr. *Edwards* has Undertaken to Prove. I Suppose a better Reason may be given Why Such Persons are So denominated. The Question here is Whether when unregenerate Persons are in Scriptures Called Believers Saints Disciples &c. The reason of this is because they are in Appearance and to a Judgment of Charity Such Godly persons as Shall be Saved. And this is What Mr. Edwards Aims to Prove and Unto this end he Makes Much use of the words *Visible* and *Visibility*, which he has pressed into his Service tho Not used in Scripture to Any Such purpose as he Endeavours to improve them for and takes Much pains in Endeavouring to Make them to Subserve his Design in Using them but I think not Much to his Advantage.

I Shall here first Observe how Mr. *Edwards* would Improve these words to his Purpose and So make good that Assertion that Visible Saints only Should be Admitted into the Visible Church the Basis on which he would build in this Argument and then Consider Some of the texts of Scripture by Which he Endeavours to Support what he pleads for.

To begin with the first of These Mr. *Edwards* in his ninth Page a Says “As real Saints are the Same with real Converts or Really gracious Persons So Visible Saints are the Same with Visible Converts or those that were Visibly Converted and gracious Persons. Visibility is the Same with Manifestation or Appearance to Our View and Apprehension or Esteem.”<sup>35</sup> Mr. Edwards here Adds many More words to Explain his /34/ Meaning and I think more than were needfull however Something of what is Said in the next page to the Same purpose I Shall add. “Visibility (Says he) is a Relative thing /34a/ and has Relation to an Eye that views or beholds. Visibility is the same as Appearance, or Exhibition to the Eye; and to be a visible saint is the same as to appear to be a real saint in the Eye that beholds; not the Eye of God, but the Eye of Man. Real saints or converts are those that are so in the Eye of God; visible saints or converts are those that are so in the Eye of Man not his bodily Eye but the Eye of his Mind, which is his Judgment, or Esteem.”<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:183-84.

<sup>36</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:185. Mayhew deleted the words “~~or Converts are those that are So in the Eye of Man not his bodily Eye &c.~~” and then inserted this long quotation on a separate leaf after noting and then canceling in the margin that “~~there is Some wanting.~~” The inserted leaf, which measures 14.5 cm by 6 cm, bears a canceled insertion note “Add [to] page 34 after [Relative] Thing.” A second insertion note on the

I hope I understand what Mr. Edwards here Means and I would not by any Means Misrepresent his sense. If I understand him right he holds and Aims To prove that Churches Should Admitt none into their Communion but Such as are Visible Saints in the Sence by him here Explained i.e. Such as are in Appearance and in a Judgment of Christian Charity real Saints or truly Godly persons and that none but truly Godly Persons being in the Sight of God Qualified for Church Communion none but Such as are in Appearance So Qualified may Lawfully be Admitted to the Priviledgs of A Church State by the Churches unto Whom Any may Offer themselves. And According to Mr. Edwards Opinion it is Under this Notion that Members Ought always to be received into Churches as he frequently Declares and will not ask Any Proof of This.

Having Now Seen What Mr. Edwards holds & Undertakes to prove I Shall Proceed to Weigh the substance of what in this Argument he Offers to Make good his Assertion, After he has fully Explained what he intends in it; And Upon this he enters in the beginning of Page 14th where he Says “The Apostle Speaks of the Members of the Christian Church as those that made a *Profession of Godliness*” And quotes for this two Texts. 1 Corinthians 9:13, *They Glorified God for your Professed Subjection to the Gospel.* 1 Timothy 2:10, *In like Manner also thus women Adorn themselves in Modest Apparel not in Costly Array but which becomes women Professing Godliness.* Upon these Texts he Says “the Apostle [is] Speaking of the women that were Members of the Great Church of *Ephesus* with good marks, Speaks of them as Supposing that they all Professed Godliness. By the Allowance of all *Profession* is one thing belonging to the Visibility of Christianity or holiness that there is in the Members of the Visible church. Visible Holiness is an Appearance or Exhibition of Holiness by those things Which are External and So fall Under our Notice And Observation. And these two, Viz. /35/ Profession and Outward Behaviour agreeable to That Profession which belongs to Visible Sainthood Must be A Profession of Godliness or real Sainthood; for a Profession makes Nothing Visible beyond what is Professed. What is it to be a Saint by Profession but to be by Profession A true Saint? For to be By Profession a false Saint is to be by Profession No Saint and Only to Profess that which if Never So true is Nothing Peculiar to A Saint is Not to be a Professing Saint.”<sup>37</sup>

In this Paragraph we have a great part of Mr. Edwards Strength, if he have any, in this Cause. I Shall therefore desire the Patience of Such as may read this Scrip while I do a little Particularly Examine what is here said. And *first* it's Evident that in this Paragraph Mr. *Edwards* Still depends Upon that which he has all Along Supposed, Viz. that the only true Notion of Visible Sainthood or holiness is an Appearance or Manifestation of real Saving

verso side of this leaf reads “In page 34 after the words positive Thing—read the words on the other side of this Paper.”

<sup>37</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:188-89.

holiness. He here Speaks as if Persons who are not Savingly Holy or truly Godly Cannot be Esteemed or denominated Saints upon Any Other Account but this Viz. there being Such as ought to be Accounted truly Godly According to A Judgment of Charity on the Profession they make, And an Appearance of true Godliness in them. But this ought not to be granted Nor do I Allow it and Hope before I have done to Make it Evident. That there are other things upon the Account of which Persons may be and are in Scripture denominated believers *holy Disciples* &c. without a Supposition of there being truly Godly in Mr. *Edwards* Seense, I think Evident. Nay I Question Whether it can be proved by Scripture that ever persons that are Really unholy are by the Spirit of God Called holy &c. upon the Account on which Mr. *Edwards* So much Insisteth.

2. I Suppose that Such a Professed Subjection to the Gosple of Christ as that which that Text Speaks of 2 Corinthians 9:13 does Not Necessarily Import Such a profession of Saving faith and holiness as Mr. *Edwards* Supposeth it does Viz. that all that make the Profession intended do profess that they are truly Godly Persons Such as are passed from Death unto life and Shall be Eternily Saved. /36/ I Suppose a Person may Profess Subjection to the Gosple, who do not Make So high a Profession as that but now Mentioned as Supposed declaring his belief of the Gosple or that he is firmly perswaded of the Truth of it. He does thereupon further Profess that he [Shall] As far forth as he is Able Conform his life unto the Doctrine and Preceps of it, Seeking as well as he can the Salvation of his Soul in the way Prescribed in it as far as he can Understand it, Striving to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven at the Strait Gate And farther Declares that he is resolved with the help of God to go on in this way Striving Against Sin, and Serving God After the best Manner he Can; And that he does not Dispair of Gods Mercy, tho he be Utterly Unworthy of it; And yet further Says that he is willing to Submitt to the Discipline of the Gosple in Christs Visible Church to be dealt withal for his Sin When he falls into it &c. I Say that I think that he that makes Such a Profession as this is does Profess Subjection to the Gosple. And yet there is Nothing in Such A Profession as this is but what a Person not yet Savingly Converted may truly Say, Yea and may Say No More than this Amounts Unto. See Hebrews 6:4, 5, 6 and 2 Peter 2:20, 21, 22 and Hebrews 10:29. Such thing[s] are true of Some not converted.<sup>38</sup>

3. As to the Women *Professing Godliness with good Works*, 1 Timothy 2:10 & Other Members of the famous Church in Ephesus (1) I grant to Mr. *Edwards* that which I think he would have viz. That they all of them Professed Godliness in the Sense of that Text, yea and I Allow that all the Adult Members of that Church did So too yea and that the Members of all other visible Churches did or Should do the Same, but I do not grant that to Profess Godliness here does intend Making Such a Profession as Mr. *Edwards* thinks it does Viz. that they all professed them to be Savingly converted and that they were<sup>39</sup> in a Judgment of Charity truly Pious or Godly persons Such As Should be Saved. In my Opinion Persons may

<sup>38</sup> Last sentence added by Mayhew.

<sup>39</sup> Last phrase added by Mayhew in the margin to replace an illegible cancelled passage.

be truly Said to Profess Godliness without Making So high A Profession as that but Now Named, if Persons Confess their Obligations to live A godly life and Profess that they Seriously Endeavour to do So, performing as Well as they Can do the Duties Which God requireth of them and Avoiding those things which they know he forbids. If They declare that they fear God and Stand in Aw of his Judgments & Take heed that they do not Provok him to Anger And that they do and will Strive to get an Intrest in Christ whom they believe to be an Allsufficient Saviour [Savior] there is I think in All this a professed Subjection to the gospel of Christ.<sup>40</sup> /37/ And besides this There Seems to be Some Kind or Degree of Conformity to Gods holy Law in that Obedience that may be Yielded to that Law by Persons that are not yet in A State of Salvation (which no Unregenerate Persons are). There are Duties which God requires of Unregenerate Persons to be done by them while they are Such. And Such Duties as these may be and Offten are Performed by them before they are Converted or born of the Spirit and Passed from Death unto life as When Unregenerate Persons read the word of God, and hear it Preached in the Assemblies of his People and Pray to him for Converting Grace, which Unconverted Persons may do. Jeremiah 31:18, & *So wait at wisdoms gates and watch at the Posts of her Doors.* Proverbs 8:34. All which I Think it Possible for an Unregenerate Person to Do. Yea if Believing in Christ be the Great Condition of the Covenant of Grace (which I think Mr. *Edwards* Acknowledgeth it to be) Must not the Performance of this Great Gospel Duty be in Order of Nature before the Sinner is Justified by God's Grace and Savingly Sanctified by his Spirit, and So before he is in Mr. *Edwards* Sense truly Righteous and Godly! And if this be true, Must there not A good and gracious work of the Spirit of God pass on the Soul of A Sinner before that by which he is Actually made a New Creature in his Regeneration, and be Preparatory to it? Now if this may be Allowed, the Change hereby Wrought in Men May, for ought I know, be fittly Called *godliness*; tho it be in the Nature of it but A work of Common Grace, and of A lower Kind than that which is Commonly So Called. This has Much Countenance given to it by Such Texts of Scripture as Call Such Persons *Righteous*, as were never Savingly Converted, and in Which Such are Said to have been *Sanctified* as Never had A Saving Change wrought in them. See *Ezekiel* 18:24, *Hebrews* 10:29, 2 *Peter* 2:26.

4. That whole Churches are in Scripture Called *Saints*, and So all the Members of them (as Mr. *Edwards*, as well as I, does hold) greatly favours what I here plead for. For it Cannot be Easily Allowed that all the Members of the whole Churches are in his Sense Visible Saints, that is, Such as in A Judgment of Charity Ought to be Esteemed real Saints or Godly Persons. /38/ I cannot think there were any Such Churches on the Earth Since Man's fall. Therefore When Whole Churches are in Scripture Called Saints &c. I think that word and other Expressions like it Must Not be Understood as Mr. *Edwards* would have them but must be Taken in Such a Sense as will be Applicable to the Whole Body So and of which the Saintship Intended may be truly predicated, at least in Some good Sense or Other. And I Shall hereafter Shew, that there is A good Sense in which Whole Churches may be and are in

<sup>40</sup> Mayhew added and then deleted the words "to endeavour to Live a Godly life."

Scripture Called Saints. Let it here Suffice that I only refer to Some Proofs of Scripture Wherein whole Churches are Spoken to or of as if they were Constituted Wholly of Holy Persons. See *Deuteronomy* 7:6 and Chapter 14:1-2, *Daniel* 8:24 & 12:7, 1 *Corinthians* 3:17 and 14:33, and 2 *Thessalonians* 5:27. And I Think the *Holiness* Predicated of the Visible Churches in Such Texts as these, is Ascribed to all the Members of Such Churches Without Reference Unto any *Inward Piety* which they are Supposed to be Endowed withall, but with regard to A *Federal Holiness*. But I Shall have Occasion to Say more to this Hereafter.

5. Whereas Mr. *Edwards* Says thus, “That Profession that belongs to Visible Saintship must be A *Profession of Godliness*,”<sup>41</sup> I Answer that this is true, if by A Profession of Godliness Such a Profession be Understood as I have here Above described in my Second and third Answers; but it is not true, if Such a Profession be meant as Mr. *Edwards* Contends for, *i.e.* that A Man must Profess that he is a true Saint, in the Sense in Which those words are generally taken. I Shall See presently how Mr. *Edwards* Can Disprove this.

6. When Mr. *Edwards* Says “To be by Profession a *false* Saint is to be by Profession *no* Saint,”<sup>42</sup> I Suppose he means No *true* Saint: and this I think may be granted to him.

7. Whereas he Says, “To Profess that which, if Never So *true*, is Not *Peculiar* to A Saint, is Not to be a *Professing Saint*,”<sup>43</sup> I grant this to be true, as he has worded it; Yet I am Still of Opinion, that A Man May be a Visible Saint, who does not Profess that he is A truly Godly Person, Such a one as Shall Certainly be Saved, Tho Mr. *Edwards* endeavours to Prove the Contrary in What now follows.

/39/I have now done with what Mr. *Edwards* has Said on the two Texts Above Alledged by him to Support what he holds: and Shall Proceed to Consider what follows, from the Middle of his fourteenth page, Wherein he farther endeavours to make good his Assertion. He had, a few lines Above, Mentioned *Profession* As one of the two things Necessary to Evidence that Piety of heart, Which he thinks ought to be discovered, in Order to Persons being Admitted to Church Communion; and he Proceeds to Shew what that Profession Must be, or What a Candidate for Admission Must Profess, and Endeavouring to Prove that he Must Profess himself to be A truly Godly, or Pious Man, if Not in so many Plain words, Yet in Such Other words as do Import the Same thing. I am Perswaded that Mr. *Edwards* will not deny, that this is what he Intends. And thus he Argues, “In order to A Man’s being Properly A Professing Christian he must Profess the Religion of Jesus Christ.” This I freely Grant, if he Speaks of the Religion of Christ as this is Opposed to all *false* Religions; as that of *Mahometism* &c. He goes on “and Surely a Man don’t Profess the Religion that was taught by Jesus Christ, if he leaves out of his Profession the Most Essential Things that belong to that Religion.” This also may be granted, if the Meaning of it be, that he does not

<sup>41</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:189.

<sup>42</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:189.

<sup>43</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:189.



Profess his belief and Approbation of those things in which the Essence of the Christian Religion does Consist, as things both true and worthy of Man's Esteem. He Proceeds: "That which is Most essential in that Religion itself, the Profession of that is Essential to a Profession of that Religion" &c.<sup>44</sup> This Again may be Allowed, if Rightly Explained and Understood, *Viz.* as Intending a belief and good Esteem of the Doctrines and Precepts of the Christian Religion. But if by A Profession of the Essentials of the Christian Religion be meant, that the Professor must declare that he himself is endowed with those graces of the holy Spirit, wherein the Essence of the Christian Religion does Consist, Considered as in the hearts of the truly Godly in the Habits and Exercise of them, as Mr. *Edwards* Intends; then this Assertion ought, I Suppose, to be Denied /40/ And I think cannot be Proved. But of this more Presently.

After a few lines, to Illustrate what has been Already Considered, of which I think there was no Need, Mr. *Edwards* Infers from the Premises (Still in the Same Page) "Therefore we cannot in any Propriety be Said to Profess the Christian or Christs Religion, Unless we doe profess those things Wherein Consists Piety of Heart, which is Vastly the Most Important and most Essential Part of that Religion, that Christ Came to teach and Establish in the world, and [is] in Effect all; being that without Which all the Rest that belongs to it is Nothing and Wholly in vain."<sup>45</sup> Here Again we have Another Part of Mr. *Edwards* greatest Strength: And I will Endeavour to give it A Just Consideration. Now it is Still here Evident that Mr. *Edwards* does by a Person's Professing Religion intend his Professing himself to be a truly Pious or Godly Man; and that there is No Other Profession of the true Christian Religion but this; And that Consequently Such a Profession as this Must be Necessary to A Persons being Admitted into the Visible Church. But the truth of all that he Says depends Upon this, that no Man can Profess the Christian Religion without Professing that he himself is A good or Godly Man, born of the Spirit and Endowed with those graces that Always Accompany Salvation. But I think in this Mr. *Edwards* Judgeth Amiss; And to what I have already Said to discover the Mistake, I Shall here Add, that the Christian Religion may be taken or Conceived of two ways, *Viz.* either (first) as it is Contained & Explained in the *Oracles of God*, I mean the holy Scriptures, which Discover the Nature or Essence of it, or (Secondly) as it is as it were Transcribed into or written in the *Hearts of Men* in their Regeneration, and made in Some Sort legible in their lives. Of this Last way we have a very Instructive Account in 2 *Corinthians* 3:3. And this is there Opposed to its being *Written in Tables of Stone*; and it may as well be Distinguisht from its being written in the *Bible*, or holy Scriptures. Now if this Distinction be Allowed, Men may be /41/ as well Said to Profess Religion who Declare their Belief and Approbation of it Considered as it is Revealed & Explained in the Scriptures, as by Declaring that it has been Savingly written in their own hearts by the finger of God in their Regeneration. A Man that Cannot Affirm the *Last* of

<sup>44</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:189.

<sup>45</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:189.

these, may yet Very truly Profess or Affirm the *First*. And if he does So, I think he may be very well Said to Profess the Christian Religion. A Man that is far from being Satisfied that he is born of God, and So cannot Profess or Affirm that he is So, may yet be really Perswaded that the Christian Religion, as it is revealed in the Scriptures, and Soundly Explained by Gods Ministers, is a true and Excellent Religion; and he that makes Such a Profession as this is Ought not to be Esteemed as A *Heathen*, or *Infidel*, tho Neither he nor Others have any good Reason to Judge him to be Savingly Converted, and tho he does not pretend to do this.

If it be here Said, that Persons that are not born of the Spirit, and So Already in Christ, and New Creatures, According to the Scriptures cannot truly make Such a Profession as that but now Mentioned; I Answer, that I Suppose the Contrary to this to be true, And ought to be Acknowledged. And this I Shall now Endeavour to Make good. And to this end I say,

4. That Men may believe the truth of the Christian Religion, that are not yet Savingly Converted. And this I assert,

*First*, because the Spirit of God does in the *Scriptures* Affirm it. This is Evident from Such Texts of Scripture, as those here following, Which I only refer Unto; not thinking it Needful to Insert the Words of them, and thinking that he that reads and Compares them Cannot well Doubt of What I Say. See and Compare *Matthew* 13:20, 21, *Luke* 8:13, *John* 2:23, 24, 25 & 8:30, 31 and 12:42, 43, Also *Acts* 8:12, 13. I would here Observe, that there is a kind of Assent Unto Divine truths, which is Peculiar to the *Regenerate* Unto which many Texts have a Reference Such as *Matthew* 16:16-17, 1 *Corinthians* 2:14, 15, 1 *John* 5:1 and Verse 20. But this does not hinder it from being A truth that *Unregenerate* Sinners may believe Divine truth, and So the truth of the Gosple, with A Faith of A Lower kind then that but Now Mentioned; and may on that Account be Called believers.

*Secondly*, There is Nothing in the *Nature of things* that hinders this, For (1) There is No want of *Sufficient Evidence* /42/ To Convince Men that have Rational Souls where the word of God is Duly Preached, that the Gosple is true. If men had Not Sufficient Evidence offered to them, to Prove the truth of this, it would be *no Sin*, not to believe it. Nay, it would then be a *Virtue*, not to give Credit to it. (2) Man's *blindness by Nature*, Since the fall, is Not Such as that a *well Attested truth*, or A Truth which has Clear and Strong reason given to Confirm it, *Cannot be Credited* by him. A Rational Perswation that the *Gosple is true*, has Nothing in it Inconsistent With the Present State of an Unregenerate Sinner. He May believe that, without Saving Grace, as well as believe that there is A God, and that Mankind are fallen into A State of Sin and Death; a Belief of which is Not Supposed to be Impossible to Unregenerate Sinners. See *James* 2:19. (3) It Seems that a *Doctrinal belief* of Or Assent Unto the truth of the Gosple is *Necessary* in Order Unto A Saving *Conversion* to God; & if So, it cannot Suppose or Imply the *Latter* as first in Order. If Men Cannot be Converted, till they believe the Gosple, then it Cannot be true, that they must be first born of God, before they give Credit to the Gosple. And Why is Men's hearing the Gosple Necessary in order to their believing Savingly, if it be Impossible for them to believe it till After they be in A State of

Salvation, as all Regenerate Persons are? See Romans 10:13-17. (4) If *unconverted* Sinners have No Power to believe the Gosple, then all are Really *Heathen* and *Infidel*, but Such as are *born of the Spirit, and become New Creatures*, Whatever Change they have had wrought in them Short of that which is Saving. And if they are ever Otherwise Called, it is only because they make a *false Shew* of Something which they have not in them, tho it is by the Spirit of God himself that they are Called Believers, Christians, Disciples, &c. I think this is Hardly to be Allowed.

2. Unconverted Persons may After Some sort *Approve of the Gosple*, as well as believe it. They may have an Esteem of it /43/ Proportionable to the Revelation of the truth of it made to them and the Discovery they have of the Goodness of the things therein made known. They may be convinced that the Saviour revealed in and by it is a very Excellent Person and Came into the World Upon a very good Design and that they Need Such a Saviour and that the great Salvation he Came to Obtain for Sinners is well worth Seeking after and that they are greatly Obligated to him for Undertaking So good a work And Performing what he Undertook, and may Rejoice When they are Informed of what he is and has done. Thus Persons Yet Unconverted who know Gods Will being Instructed out of the Law (the word of God) may Approve of the things that are Excellent. Romans 2:18. Through the power of Sin in Mens Corrupt Natures they do not Always Close Savingly With things that they See to be good and in themselves Much to be Desired but Chuse rather to Enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season. If this were not So I do not See how Sinners Could hold the truth in Unrighteousness, Romans 1:18, and Sin Against the light of their Consciences. And further is it Not Acknowledged on All hands that Unconverted Sinners May be Under very Great Convictions of the Sinfulness of their lives and this Plainly Implies a conviction of the goodness of the things which they have Neglected refused and Abused, and the Badness of the Contrary. And Again does not a Rational Conviction of the Goodness of things Spiritual always go before Saving Conversion and put the Sinner upon Seeking After them? Can or will A Sinner ever call Upon God to Convert him or give him A New heart without Some conviction of its being a good thing & worth a Desiring?

3. More than all this may be truly Asserted concerning Some Unconverted Sinners that is good and Commendable as that they may take up Resolutions to Endeavour to Depart from Iniquity and follow after that which is Good that they will Strive against Sin and Seek God's face and favour and that they will Seek After an Intrest in Christ that they may be found in him at the great Day of Accounts. It will not be Denied that Unconverted Sinners may be Under many /44/ Deep Convictions of their Sinfull and Miserable State. And if So, is it then to be thought Impossible that they Should Resolve to be Earnest with God to deliver them & plead the Merits of Christ through whom Alone they are Convinced it is Possible any Sinner Should be Saved? And may Not A Sinner Under Such Convictions tho it be no more than from A work of Common Grace Make Serious Promises to God to do what he can do while he is Short of A Saving Conversion to Obtain Eternal life in the Way of the New Covenant?

4. It is Possible that Unconverted Sinners Should Actually Enter upon or Set About the Performance of the Duties that they have resolved and Promised to perform. It is Possible

for A Convinced And Awakened Sinner to Strive Against known Sins and in Some Measure to Abstain from them and Seriously to Endeavour to Perform known duties and Do many things which they Should Do and Make Serious Inquiries Affter a further knowledge of their duty And What they must Do to be Saved and to Call upon God in the Name of his Son to help them by his holy Spirit in the Discharging of What they are Seriously Endeavouring to Do. All that Do Such things as these may Not Presently Conclude that they are Already Passed from Death Unto life tho I believe that Such are in the Strait way that Leads to life and if they do not Obtain it it is because they do Not go on As they have begun. Such are in Scripture Called Righteous and if they fall away are Said to turn from their Righteousness tho they were *Never born of the Spirit* and their Apostasy is Spoken of [as] the Cause of their Destruction, Ezekiel 18:24-26, which those Texts do also well Agree, 2 Peter 2:20, 21, 22, and that also Hebrews 10:28-29. Such may in A good Sense be Said *to run well* and the reason Why they fall Short of the Prize is because they grow weary of well doing. Matthew 10:22, 24, [2 Thessalonians 2:]13. “That there is No danger of Regenerate Persons falling Away and Perishing”<sup>46</sup> Mr. Edwards and I are agreed. /45/I Therefore Understand Such Texts as having a Relation to Such a Change in Sinners as is Ordinarily Preparatory to a work of Saving Conversion and I think that Otherways to expound them will on A Due Consideration of them be found much to favour the Doctrine of the Possibility of the Saints Total Apostacy.

Thus far in Answer to the Last Paragraph in Page 14 of Mr. *Edwards* Book, What followeth to the Middle of his Sixteenth Page lying very little or Nothing in My Way but being Adapted to the State of the Question and as it Standeth between him and Others, & Opposed to Mr. *Stoddards* Opinion and way of Managing the Controversy I Shall not Concern myself with what he has there Said<sup>47</sup> but Proceed to the Third general head by Me proposed Viz.

Section III which was briefly to Consider what Mr. Edwards has Offered in his *first Argument* Against the Hypothesis which I favour and Endeavour to Defend.

I Acknowledge that this Scarce needed to have been made a Distinct Head in my Discourse being included in What Mr. *Edwards* has Said in the Management of his first Argument but it being what most Concerns me (tho I am not Named) I was Willing to give it a Distinct consideration and upon this I Shall now Enter.

<sup>46</sup> Mayhew placed this sentence in quotation marks, although it does not correspond to Edwards’s *Humble Inquiry*. The preceding citation from Matthew, moreover, appears to contain an error. Literally rendered, it reads “Matt 10-22-24-13.” One possibility is that Mayhew’s copyist accidentally omitted a reference to 2 Thessalonians 2:13. Commenting on this verse in *An Exposition of the New Testament, in Three Volumes* (London: Aaron Ward, 1746-1748), English theologian John Gill argued that the text affirmed the Calvinist doctrine of the perseverance of the saints and—in words approximating Mayhew’s quotation—maintained that those who “were regenerated, called, sanctified, and brought to the belief of the truth” were in “no danger of their falling away and perishing” (3:245).

<sup>47</sup> See Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:190-91.

And Upon this Mr. *Edwards* thus begins about the Middle of his Sixteenth Page “There is one way to Evade these things (i.e. those Asserted by him) which has been taken by Some. They plead Altho it be true that the Scripture represents the Members of the Visible Church of Christ as Professors of *Godliness* And they are Abundantly Called by the name of *Saints* in Scripture Undoubtedly because they were *Saints by Profession and in Visibility* and the Acceptance of *Others*, Yet this is not with Reference to *Saving Holiness* but to Quite another Sort of Saintship Viz. *Moral Sincerity* and that this is the real Saintship Discipleship and Godliness which is Professed And Made Visible in them and with regard to which as having an Appearance of it to the Eye of Reason they have the Name Saints Disciples &c. in Scripture.”<sup>48</sup> I do not know who will Own this to be a Just and fair Account of a Scheme they own and would Defend. I am Sure I cannot Do it; But because there are Things in it as it is here Set Down which Agreeeth with my Way of Thinking I Shall Endeavour to Defend So much of it as is Coincident with what I hold Not Otherwise, Not Troubling myself /46/ About it as it is here Represented.

That which I and I Suppose many Others do hold About the Matter now under Consideration is *First* we do not think that true Piety or Saving Holiness is Necessary in the Sight of God to Qualify Men for full Communion in the Visible Church. And *Secondly* and Consequently we hold that No Evidences of *Saving holiness* Ought to be required as Needfull visibly or in the Eye of the Church to Qualify Persons for Admission into it. *Thirdly* We believe that a Sort of Holiness of a Lower kind than that but now named is Necessary in Order to Church Communion and are ready to Shew Wherein this Consists. And if this be what Mr. *Edwards* intends by *moral Sincerity* we would not Needlessly Contend About words if the thing intended be understood. And that Such A Saintship as I Speak of ought to be duely Discerned is also granted Unto which end a Profession of it not Contradicted by a Conversation not Agreeable to it we judge to be Sufficient or Otherwise if it be Said that this is to be Done by a Serious Profession of the Christian Religion and A Conversation Agreeable to Such a Profession I am Contented. But then I think that Such A Profession may be made without A Persons Affirming himself (in Any words whatsoever) to be Savingly Converted as I have before Declared And I think it needfull here to Say that when We are Speaking of the Qualifications Necessary in Order to an Admission to full Communion in the Visible Church this Cannot relate to such as were before in it, viz. baptised Persons. I mean the Children of the Church that are grown up to Years of Discretion. For these being Already Church Members I think they have a right to full Communion Unless they have by their Sin Cast themselves off from it, which Such may many ways do; but Not by their not Professing that they are already Converted and Savingly holy. Mr. *Edwards* having Set

<sup>48</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:191. In his note on this passage, David D. Hall contends that Edwards borrowed the phrase “Moral sincerity” from Solomon Stoddard’s *An Appeal to the Learned: Being a Vindication of the Right of Visible Saints to the Lord’s Supper, though Destitute of a Saving Work of God’s Spirit on Their Hearts* (Boston: Benjamin Green, 1709), 45. In the preceding paragraph, however, Mayhew presumes that Edwards was criticizing *Right to the Lord’s Supper Considered*, 14.

Down the Opinion which he Opposeth in Such a manner as Pleased him And as Might Make it Appear to be Absurd Proceeds to Say “it must be Noted that in this Objection (for so he Calls it) /47/ The Visibility Supposed is of real Saintship Discipleship & Godliness but only Another Sort of *real Godliness* then that Which belongs to those who Shall be finally owned by Christ as his People at the Day of Judgment.”<sup>49</sup> Mr. *Edwards* by thus wording the *Opinion* of those he Disputes Against and Perhaps not as they have Done Seems to Aim to make it Appear very Ridiculous as by Calling the holiness intended *Real Godliness*, but I have Plainly Shewn what we Intend.

Having worded the Opinion he Mislikes According to his own Mind he Answers to it “This is A meer *Evasion*; the only one that ever I Saw, or heard of and I think the only one Possible. For tis Certain they are Not Possessors [professors] of Sanctifying Grace of true Saintship the Principle Proceeded on being that they Need Make no pretence to that nor has any Visibility of Saving holiness anything to do in the Affair. If then they have Any Holiness at all it must be of another Sort. And if this *Evasion* fails all fails and the whole Matter of Debate must be given Up.” To this I Reply Whither Mr. *Edwards* does well Prove this to be A *Meer Evasion* or no I am now to Consider but I like well Mr. *Edwards* Confession that it is the only One that he ever Saw or heard of &c. as is Abovesaid. I also Approve of what he next Says viz. “therefore I do Desire that this Matter may be Impartially Considered and Examin’d to the Very Bottom and that it may be throughly Enquired Whither this Distinction of these two Sorts of *Christianity* Godliness and holiness is A Distinction that Christ in his word is the Author of” &c.<sup>50</sup> I think I need not write All he Says but I Desire him to Make his word good. Thus He entreteth on What he Undertakes Page 17 near the Top of the Page. “1. According to this Hypothesis the words Saints Disciples and Christians are used *four* Ways in the New Testament as Applied to four Sorts of Persons,” Which having Said Instanceth in the four ways he Intends And I will Consider them. (1) He Says “To those that in *truth* and *Reallity* are the Heirs of Eternal life” and this is Readily /48/ Granted as Not to be Disputed. (2) “To those that Profess this and Pretend to make a fair Shew of A Suprem Love to Christ &c. but have not any real Ground for these Pretences.”<sup>51</sup> This also may be granted Such as those are in Scripture often Called Saints &c. But the Question is What is the Reason of their being by the Spirit of God thus Denominated? That Which Mr. *Edwards* here Aims At is that that their Making Such fair Shews and Pretences of being truly Godly is the Reason Why God in his word Calls them by Such Names but of this they Are not Convinced that would Support the Scheme which I am for, they will readily Acknowledge that Among Men who Judge According to Outward Appearance this is a Common way of Speaking, and So they Call Such good Christians and Saints that are Such According to a Judgment of Charity but we do not know that God does

<sup>49</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:192.

<sup>50</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:192.

<sup>51</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:192.

So too. We believe that there are better Grounds of Mens being So Denominated by the Spirit of God in the holy Scriptures who are not in a State of Salvation than that by Mr. *Edwards* Contended for, (1) Because the Spirit of God has no need or Occasion to Speak of Men After this Manner tho we have (2) Because we know that the words Mentioned and Others like them are often Applied to Persons of Whom there is no room to Judge in Charity that they are truly Godly and in a State of Salvation. This I believe Mr. *Edwards* will not deny: Persons who never made any Such fair Shews of true Piety as Mr. *Edwards* Speaks of are frequently Called Saints & Disciples &c. (3) Because there are Other better Reasons of Such Denominations than that Mr. *Edwards* Insists So Much Upon As first because Persons that have not Such faith And holiness as Mr. *Edwards* Calls Saving May Yet be endowed with a kind of Real faith and holiness that is A Sufficient Ground for Such Names and Titles as have been Mentioned as I think I have already Proved and Shall further Manifest. Secondly because there is a Sort of Relative holiness upon the Account of which Persons may be Called *Saints Servants* and *Children* of God who Discover no real Internal holiness but may Consist with Visible Ungodliness. This Consists in a Covenant Relation which may remain for Some Time Undesolved after Persons have by their Sins Deserved to be Discovenanted and Rejected. /49/ And thus Such as become Visibly very Wicked may Still be Stiled *Gods People His Servants his Children* &c. And Now Mr. *Edwards* Needs not to be told (tho Some others may) that Such are very often So Stiled in Scripture.<sup>52</sup> Thus a woman may remain a mans wife Still tho She has Vertually broken her Marriage Covenant by her Adulteries And A Mans Covenant Servant by Indenture may remain his Servant Still and be So Called however disobedient and Rebellious he be. Malicy [Malachi] 6, Isaiah 7:1, 2, 3, Deuteronomy 32:19, Jeremiah 3:14, 20-22. I Shall here Observe that tho a Profession of Religion And an Appearance of Faith and Repentance be Necessary to Mans first Admission into the Visible Church Yet it Appears by what has been Now Said that Persons may in fact Continue Members of it for a Time And So be Called Gods People his Children And Servants After they Appear to be Inheriently very Vicious and Unholy as having S[t]ill a Federal and Relative Holiness as having been by God himself Set Apart and Devoted to his Service. But of this Mr. *Edwards* has taken No Notice in his Account of the four Sorts of Saintship (Which he Speaks of as two too Many) Which he Supposes those to think to be Spoken of in Scripture Who are for the Hypothesis he Opposeth and of which I am now Considering Tho of this Now Mentioned kind of holiness Other Divines Speak often as Mentioned in Scripture And we whom he withstandeth do own it. Mr. *Edwards* goes on and Says (3) “To those who Altho they hant Saving Grace yet have Another Sort of *Real Holiness or Saintship* Viz. Moral *Sincerity* in Religion And So are Properly a Sort of *real Saints* true Christians Sincerely Godly Persons and Disciples indeed tho they have no Saving grace.”<sup>53</sup> And now is this not a very frightfull Account of one of those things which are Contained in their Scheme whom Mr. *Edwards* is here Opposing being Viewed in Such A Dress as Mr.

<sup>52</sup> Mayhew marked this passage with an asterisk.

<sup>53</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:192.

Edwards is pleased to put it into? How far forth I Acknowledge what is here Charged Upon those that would Support the Hypothesis here Opposed I have already plainly Declared and am not by this Representation of the Opinion Disposed to Desent<sup>54</sup> it. We do Indeed hold that there is indeed a kind of faith *Repentance holiness &c. which yet are not in Mr. Edwards Sense Saving graces* or Such as that all that Attain to them Shall Certainly be /50/ Eternally Saved; And Yet we think they have a real being And do not Exist only in the Imaginations of Some Men. Let what I have already Said in favour of this Opinion in My Second Section be Considered and Also in my Printed Letter which Mr. Edwards has made me Sensible that he has Seen and read,<sup>55</sup> and the Testimony of Dr. *Owen* Unto the Same truth<sup>56</sup> Unto which Also there are a great Number of Other Divines that Do fully Agree of which I Shall only here name one Viz. Mr. *Baxter* in his *Saints Everlasting rest* Part 1 Section 6 as Mr. *Blake* Quotes him, “*There is a Common grace which is Not Saving Yet real and So true and good, And So true grace, as well as Special Saving grace.*”<sup>57</sup> But in this Matter I do not depend Upon Human Testimonies but on those that are Divine. But now that Sort of Holiness or Saintship which we Really Intend in our Scheme is by Mr. *Edwards* Set forth in Such words as Are ordinarily Used to Discriminate Saving from Common grace as if the Scheme Absurdly Supposed that there are really two Such Different Sorts of Grace<sup>58</sup> or Holiness that are indeed the Same. And indeed Mr. Edwards denies in Some of his words Already Quoted from his 17th Page that there is any Such Distinction made by Christ in his word as our Opinion Supposeth. But I Shall Say Something further then I have yet done to Clear Up this Matter, And

1. Do not Orthodox Divines generally Assert And will Not Mr. Edwards himself Allow it to be A truth that there [are] two Sorts of Grace Viz. *Common* and *Special* or *Saving*. And may it not as well be Said that there are two Sorts of Holiness Common and Saving? Mr. *Edwards* himself frequently Useth these words as Synonymous or words of the Same Signification and thus there may be A Common and Saving *faith* Repentance hope &c. Betwixt which there May be A Specific Difference and Yet both kinds be graces of the Spirit. /51/ And do not Divines When they Speak of Common and Saving grace Intend in

<sup>54</sup> Mayhew’s original text read “~~Defend~~.”

<sup>55</sup> In *Misrepresentations Corrected*, Edwards identified Mayhew’s *Right to the Lord’s Supper Considered* as a “piece which has long been well known among Mr. [Solomon] Williams’ nearest relatives, and in good repute with them; as I have had occasion to observe” (WJE 12:371).

<sup>56</sup> John Owen, *The Doctrine of the Saints Perseverance, Explained and Confirmed* (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1654). Mayhew cited a passage from the first chapter of Owen’s classic treatise in *Right to the Lord’s Supper*, 9-10, and *Grace Defended*, 151-52.

<sup>57</sup> Thomas Blake, *The Covenant Sealed, or a Treatise of the Sacraments of Both Covenants Polemicall and Practicall* (London: Abel Roper, 1655), 132. For the source of Blake’s quotation, see Richard Baxter, *The Saints Everlasting Rest: Or a Treatise of the Blessed State of the Saints in Their Enjoyment of God in Glory*, 2d ed. (London: Thomas Underhill and Francis Tyton, 1651), part 3, chap. 11, sect. 6.

<sup>58</sup> This phrase appears after the words “that there are two Different Sorts of Grace,” which were not struck from the manuscript.



respect of both Something that really Exists or has A being and Something that may be fittly Called by the name of Grace. If Not why do they Call them both by that good Name. Yea do they not many of them teach that God by his word and Spirit is the Author of them both and that Common grace is A good Preparative to that which is Saving if Not Absolutely Necessary? I believe Mr. Edwards knows that this is the Opinion of a great Number of very Worthy Divines.

2. Is this a Distinction for which there is no ground in Scripture. Can no foundation be there found for it So that our Divines have been Utterly Mistaken in Making Such a Distinction. If any think So I believe they that are [are] Under the Mistake. Don't we read in Scripture which is the word of Christ, of two Sorts of believers one Sort of which had A Saving faith & of others that believed the word Preached and that believed *in* and *on* Christ Who yet had not A true Saving faith. Had not *Simon Magus* that Sort of faith I have now Mentioned Acts 8:13. And it is very Likely many Others of those that [are] Said to have believed Upon the Sight of the Miracles then wrought did. So also the Stony Ground hearers Who believed only for A While, Luke 18:13 & Matthew 13:20, 21. And had not those who are Said to have *believed in Christ*, John 2:23 and Chapter 12:42, Some Sort of *Real faith* in him tho Not that which was Saving? Or were all these Men Mentioned Said to believe because they Were in Appearance and in A Judgment of Charity Savingly Converted? If Mr. Edwards thinks So I believe he will find few Expositors of his Mind. The Circumstances of the Places where these are Mentioned Show that this was not the Reason. And I farther Ask Whether those Mentioned in Hebrews 6:4, 5, 6 Who are there Said *to have been enlightned and to have tasted of the Heavenly Gift and been made Partakers of the holy Ghost /52/* And had tasted of the word of God & the power of the World to Come, Whither these (I Say) had Not Some kind of Faith tho not that which was Saving, or Whither they had those things Said of them by the Spirit of God As being According to a Judgment of Charity truly Godly People? Is it not rather to be allowed that they had A Sort of Grace that was A Sufficient ground for their being thus Spoken of Which yet was not that which was Saving? And therefore it is Supposed in verse 6: That they might fall Away. And when it is there Said if they Should Do So it would be Impossible to renew them Again Unto repentance it Seems Plainly Supposed that they had once a kind of Repentance tho not that which is Said to be Unto life. And it is Implied in Verse 9 That they had none of the Things that are Peculiar to true Saints *But beloved we are Perswaded better things of you and Things that Do Accompany Salvation*. And I also Ask Whether Such are Not Said to have been *Sanctified*, Hebrews 19:29, who were not Savingly holy and may Not those Spoken of in 2 Peter 2:20 Who are there Said to have *Escaped the Pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Christ* be truly Said to have Experienced a Work of Sanctification of a lower kind than that which is Saving and Peculiar to the Regenerate and So may be truly Said to have been holy as well as Other Such reformers Might be *Called Righteous* in Ezekiel 18:24-26 and Elsewhere. I Know not what Such are supposed to fall from Which they had not as good or better be without if it be Not *a kind of Grace* or holiness. I cannot now think that Either *Mr. Edwards* or Any Other Learned Divine will tell me that Such People as I have been Mentioning are Called believers Saints Righteous &c. are So Called Only as being in A Judgment of Charity true Saints &

Not on the Account of any Qualifications which they Were really Endowed withal. The places w[h]ere they Are Mentioned do plainly Show the Contrary and there are Other Such places that I can Shew if need be.

I now think it is Manifest that Mr. Edwards /53/ is much Mistaken in What next follows viz. Tis Manifest by What was before Observed that these words (Saints Disciples &c.) “are there (in Scriptures) Used but Two ways and that those of Mankind Unto whom these names are Applied are there Distinguished into but two Sorts Viz. Those who have really A Saving Intrest in Christ &c. And those that have a Name for it as having A Profession And Appearance of it.” I think I have plainly Shewn the Contrary let him that reads Judge. Mr. Edwards Next Says “This is further evident by Various Representations Which we there find it (i.e. in the New Testament) of the Visible Church as in the Company of *Virgins* that went forth to Meet the Bridegroom, we find A Distinction of them into two Sorts Viz. the wise that had both Lamps and Oil and those that had Lamps Indeed like the Wise Virgins (Therein having an External Shew of the Same thing viz. oil) but really had no oil Signifying that they had the Same profession and outward Shew of the Same Sort of Religion And Entertained the Same hopes of the Wise Virgins.”<sup>59</sup> I Confess I do Not See how what is here Said Makes that Manifest which it is Said to Prove but rather the Contrary For (1) both the *Wise* and *Foolish* Virgins Mentioned in this Parable were Members of the Visible Church. This Mr. Edwards believes as well as I. (2) Those foolish are here Called Virgins as well as the Wise And this may Well Mean that they were Such as are Said to have Escaped the Pollutions of the World Through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in 2 Peter 2:20 and So had a kind of faith in Christ Tho they had not the Oil of Saving Grace in their hearts. And there is no Doubt but Men may be believers in Christ who are not in A regenerate State as I have Abundantly Shewed And as is further Evident by that in Ephesians 1:13 In whom After ye believed ye were Sealed with the holy Spirit of Promise. And this I think, I can Prove that all and Only they are that are Created Anew in Christ Jesus as in 2 Corinthians 5:17. (3) There is No fault found in the Parable that there were Such Virgins in the Visible Church. This was not that for which they were Called Foolish but their fault was /54/ Their not Seasonably taking a Due course to Provide themselves with the Oyl they needed and now taking a foolish Method to get it and therefore they were now Advised by the wise Virgins to a right one if it had not been to late. *Go ye rather to them that Sell and buy for yourselves.* This they had Opportunity to have done All the Time they had been of the Church Visible. (4) These *foolish Virgins* having *Lamps* Supposing this to Mean a Profession of Religion Yet it did not Necessarily Intend A Profession that they were endowed with Saving grace the Oil Intended Which it does not Appear that Either the wise or the foolish pretended to have had in Order to their Admission into the Church. Now What is there in All this to Make good what Mr. Edwards Asserts. Mr. Edwards goes on “So when the Visible is represented as the Husbandmans Floor we find A Distinction of 2 Sorts Viz. the wheat and the chaff.” This Indeed Seems to Shew that there are two Sorts of People

<sup>59</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:192-93.

in the Visible Church Viz. Some *good* and Others *Bad* but this is what we All own. But Mr. Edwards does not Make it Appear that the Chaff was received in because it had Such an Appearance of being good wheat that the Church was Obligated to take it for Such. Mr. Edwards Adds “So again when the Church is Compared to the Husbandmans Field we find a Distinction of two Sorts the Wheat and the Tares which (Naturalists Observe) Show or Appear Exactly like Wheat till it Comes to bring forth fruit Representing those that are only Visible Christians having a Visibility or Appearance of the Nature of that Wheat which Shall be gathered into Christs barn and that Nature is Saving Grace.”<sup>60</sup> From hence it is Evident that there are in the Visible Church Two Sorts of Persons Wheat & Tares good and Bad People and Mr. Edwards Makes it Evident that he Can find Texts Enough to Prove this: But I think this not Much to his Advantage but because (as it Seems) Tares and Wheat Appear very Much Alike till they bring forth fruit. Mr. Edwards Thinks They who are So Called are received into the Church as being in Appearance real Wheat. I Suppose then that the Wheat and the Tares were received into the Church While they Cannot be Distinguished one from the Other and that they May And Ought So to be and if So I think no Judgment Can be Made by the Church as to that when they Should be received into it. /55/ And if it be Allowed that none but Wheat who are truly Godly persons are fit Matter for the Visible Church I think that Asoon [as soon] as they Appear to be Tares not Wheat they Should be plucked Up and Cast out of the field Which yet the Prudent Husbandman would Not Allow his Servants to put in Practice as they would have done but would have both the Wheat and the Tares grow Together in the field till the Harvest. And Such as this is are many of Mr. Edwards Texts to Prove what he holds.

Mr. Edwards Now Proceeds in his 28 page to Say (2) “Tis Evident that those who had the name of *Disciples* in the Times of the New Testament bore that Name With Reference to a Visibility and Pretence of the Same *Relation* to Christ which they had who Should be Finally owned as his. This (he Says) is *Manifest* by John 8:30-31, *As he Spake these words many believed on him. Then Said Jesus to those Jews that believed on him if ye Continue in my Words then are ye my Disciples Indeed.*”<sup>61</sup> Unto What is here Said I Answer (1) That I Acknowledge that there be many Texts in the New Testament Whereby the Word *Disciples* Such are Intended as are truly Godly And Shall be Saved but that in Such Texts they are So Called because they Pretend to be Such and Make a Shew of Reall Piety. I cannot Say I do not know of Any Text as will prove this. I think the Text here Quoted Does not do it.

With Respect to this Text I Shall Observe for my Present Purpose (1) That these who are in it twice Said to have believed on Christ are not Called Such Believers as Persons Already Savingly Converted or as being in A Judgment of Charity Such but as Persons that had Assented to the Truth of that Revelation that had been made of Christ to them by Such A belief of the Truth as Unregenerate Sinners are Capable of. This I Suppose Mr. Edwards

<sup>60</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:193.

<sup>61</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:193.

as well as many Others will Agree with me in. (2) In what follows which our Lord Said to them if ye Continue in my Word, then are ye My Disciples Indeed our Saviour does Not Mean that they will hereby become his Disciples but that they will Thereby Shew themselves to be Indeed Such as Might be truly So Called and When they are required to Continue in Christs Word it is Implied that they had to /56/ Begun to Obey it and if they Continued to Obey it that would Make it Appear that they [were] even then his Disciples. And by being his Disciples indeed I think that Christ does not intend, Such Disciples as Shall Certainly be Eternily Saved but Such as may Indeed Properly and do Offten in Scripture bear the Name of Disciples and are in a good Sense Such and Not falsly So Called tho they had Not yet been born of the Spirit. That this may be and Probaly is the true Sense of these words I offer two Reasons to Shew. The *First* is Because it is Evident by Scripture that Persons May be and Really are Disciples of Christ while they follow him or walk with him tho they are not Savingly Converted. So were those Mentioned in John 6:66 before they forsook him. They are Expressly Said to have been Such. My Second Reason is from What we have in the Next words verse 32, And ye Shall know the truth and the truth Shall make you free. That is if ye Continue in my Words you Shall do So i.e. you Shall know the Truth Experimently and Savingly or in Such a manner as no Man in A State of Nature does or Can know it and So in A manner Peculiar to regenerate Souls and so Such as are Disciples *indeed* in A far Stricter Sense then these words do in this Text mean. And thus Such A knowledge of the Truth as is here intended as we have Often elsew[h]ere Spoken of as in Psalm 51:6, Proverbs 2:5-6 and vers 10-11, John 17:3-8, 1 John 2:27, and Chapter 5:20 also Hosea 6:3. And then as it follows in the Next words the truth there known *Shall make you free* i.e. from the Power and Dominion of Sin in your Souls as in Romans 6 vers 14, 18-22. I acknowledge that I believe that Such as Continue in Christs word as is Above Expressed Shall in due Time Obtain the Knowledge which I have Now Spoken of. I here only further Say that I find nothing Yet in the words I have been Considering that favour that which Mr. Edwards Alledgeth them for. But they Seem rather to Make Against his Opinion. The two Texts Which we are Directed to Compare with that Already Considered, Luke 15:25, 26, 27, are readily Confessed to Mean Such Disciples as Shall be Saved but it Dont from thence follow that that Already Spoken to Must do So too and if it did there is Nothing in Either to Mr. Edwards purpose viz. to Prove that when Such as one are Called Disciples who are not in A State of Salvation that they are So Called because they are in Appearance and in A Judgment of Charity Such Disciples as Shall be Eternally Saved which indeed /57/I do not think to be true but to be already Disproved. Christ has had and may Still have many Disciples that are Indeed Such of two Sorts the one Sort of them by far more Excellent than the Other, one Sort of them Such as Shall be Saved the Other Sort Such as have a Sort of faith in him that is good of its kind and are the Present followers of him for Instructions Yet are not Passed from Death to life but may fall Away and walk No more with him as those being Offended did, John 6:56. Those were really Christs Disciples and were Called by that Name by the Inspired Evangelist And were not So in A Judgment of Charity Only and So there were many Others While he was here on the Earth and Still are Such. And Such were *Judas Xemas* & Simon the Sorcerer &c. and Such were they that received the word with Joy and believed

for a while but having No root in a Day of Temptation turned Apostates, Matthew 13:20 & Luke 8:13. And Under the Old Testament Many Righteous Persons Such as [are] Indeed in a good Sense Such are Supposed to be liable to turn from their Righteousness. See Ezekiel 18:24-26 with which Compare 2 Peter 2:20, 21, 22 and Hebrews 6:4, 5, 6. In all which Places there is a Real Change Supposed And Not that the Persons Spoken of were in Charity Esteemed of as truly Godly tho that might be also true. But whatever they Might be Accounted of with Respect to Real Piety what they had in Reality Attained Unto was a Sufficient Ground for Such Denominations As Believers Saints &c. without A Supposition that they were born of the Spirit and Past any Danger of being Lost. Such Indeed as are Savingly Converted do never fall Away as those did and those Mentioned in the word Above Alledged by Mr. Edwards. He goes on and Says “(3) The Same Thing is evident by 1 John 2:19, *They went out from Us but they were Not of Us*. If they had been of Us they would No Doubt have Continued with Us. The words Naturally Suggest and Imply that those Professing Christians who at last Proved *false* did before they Went out Seem to belong to the Society of the *true Saints* or those /58/ Endowed with persevering Grace and Holiness. They Seem’d to be of their Number i.e. they were So in Pretence and visibility and were So Excepted in the Judgment of Charity.”<sup>62</sup> I Answer Suppose all this were granted to be true it Amounts to no More than this: There have been Some Persons in the Visible Church that Seemed to be very Pious or Godly Who yet fell Away went out from Among Gods People the truly Pious that were in the Visible Church as well as others that were not so; and thir doing thus made it Manifest that they were never of the Number of those in the Church that had Persevering grace. And what would Mr. Edwards Infer from hence? I Suppose it is that none ought to be Admitted into the Visible Church but Such as are in Appearance and According to A Judgment of Christian Charity truly Godly Persons and Under the *Notion* of there being Such but I See not how this follows from the Premises. I think this needs no more to be Said to it. He goes on and Say “(4) The Name and Visibility that Nominal Christians had in the Days of the New Testament was of Saving Christianity and Not of Moral Sincerity for they had a name to live tho many of them were Dead, Revelation 2:1. Now it is very Plain what that is in Religion which is Called by the Name of life all over the New Testament viz. Saving grace. I dont know that any thing else of A Religious Nature is ever so Called.”<sup>63</sup> Answer: I think I may here well Inquire (1) Whether the whole Church of Sardis here Spoken to had a Name thus to live I mean all the Members of the Church (2) Whether these words (*But ye are Dead*) were Spoken to the whole Church. I Suppose Mr. Edwards would Say No to both these Questions and that the words do only Intend a great many of the Members of that Church and if So then I grant this to be plainly Intended in the words But do not See how it will follow from hence that None were Admitted into that Church or at Lest Should have been, on any Other Reason but that their being Judged to be

<sup>62</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:194.

<sup>63</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:194.

in a Regenerate State. I have no Reason to Doubt of its being A truth that Persons that are looked Upon as having Spiritual life may Yet in Reality be Dead.

Mr. Edwards Says /59/“(5) The Visibility that Visible Christians had of Saintship in the Apostles Days was not of *Moral Sincerity* but *gracious Sincerity* or Saving Saintship” (I Suppose he means not of the first of those only but of both and his Reasons follow), “For they are Spoken of as being Visibly of the Number of Those Saints that Shall Judge the world and Judge Angels. 1 Corinthians 6:1, 2, 3, Dare any of You having a Matter Against Another go to Law before the Unjust and not before the Saints? Do ye Not know that the Saints Shall Judge the world? And if the world Shall be Judged by You are ye Unworthy to Judge the Smallest Matters? Know ye not that WE Shall Judge Angels? These Things (Says Mr. Edwards) do Manifestly imply that if the Christian *Corinthians* were such as the Supposed they were and what they Professed to be and what they were Accepted to be they were Some of those Saints who at the Day of Judgment Should Judge Angels & Men” &c.<sup>64</sup> Does Mr. Edwards then think that the whole Church of Corinth Unto Whom these words were written Supposed and Professed that they were in a Regenerate State when the Apostle writes to them and that they were Accepted As Such. If he thinks so as he seems to Do I cannot be of his mind. The Saints the Apostle Speaks here of that Shall Judge the world and Judge Angells at the last Day were not as I Suppose the whole Church nor do I think that the whole Church thought themselves to be or Professed themselves to be, of that holy and happy Number either at the Time When those words were Spoken or at the time When they were Admitted into A Visible Church State or that every one of the Members of that Church were ever Judged by those that Admitted them to be Such Saints as Should Judge Angels and Men at the Day of Judgment tho I Suppose there Were in that Church Some Such Excellent Persons As Such a Character as is here given of the Most Eminent Among them would Very well Agree Unto. And I take the Scope of the Apostles Discourse from the first to the 9 Vers was to Convince the Contentious Members of that Church of the Unreasonableness of their Practice in Carrying their Law Cases before Heathen and Infidel Judges when they /60/ When they had Men in the Church So well Qualified to Judge of Such Cases as did or Might Arise among them. In all this I See nothing of Weight to Support the Cause Undertaken by *Mr. Edwards*. He goes on and says “(6) That the Visibility was not only of Moral Sincerity but of Saving Grace is Manifest because the Apostle Speaks of Visible Christians as Visible Members of Christs Body of his flesh and Bones and the Spirit With him and Temples of the Holy Ghost, Ephesians 5:36 and 1 Corinthians 6:16-19”<sup>65</sup> &c. To what is thus Said I Answer that all the Members of the Visible Church are Members of the Body of Christ Whither they Such be in Appearance and in A Judgment of Charity in A regenerate State or No for to be Members of Christs Body is Not Peculiar to truly Godly Persons in the Texts quoted the Whole Churches of Ephesus and Corinth are Spoken to &

<sup>64</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:194.

<sup>65</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:194.

all the Members of these Churches and I Suppose they were not all real Vital Members of Christs Body as all Regenerate Persons are. Nor do I Suppose that the Apostle Wrote to them as being all in A Judgment of Charity Such or that he Supposed that they had all ever professed themselves To be in so good a State or that Such a Profession was Necessary in Order to their being Admitted into the Church Visible. That the Church Visible is the Body of Christ all the Members belonging to it Appears plainly in John 15 beginning And Romans Chapter 11. Even Such Members as were broken of[f] And taken Away and burnt by reason of Unbelief and Unfruitfullness was branches in Christ the true Vine and fig tree before their Excision is Evident /61/ As the Places refered unto do Plainly Shew. Mr. Edwards goes on and Says Under the Same head Page 19 “The Apostle Peter Speaks of Visible Christians as those that were Visibly Righteous Persons and Should be Saved and that are Distinguished from the *Ungodly* And *them that Obey Not the Gospel* Who Shall Perish. 1 Peter 4:16, 17, 18, *Yet if any Man Suffer as a Christian* let him not be *Ashamed* but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the Time is Come that Judgment Must begin at the house of God; And if it first begin at US (us Christians Comprehending himself and those to whom he Wrote and all of that Sort) *what shall the End be of them* that Obey not the Gospel of God? And if the Righteous Scarcely be Saved where Shall the Ungodly And Sinners Appear?”<sup>66</sup> I Answer Persons May belong to the house of God and be Christians in the Sence of the Text Alleged Who yet have not a Saving Faith and are not Savingly holy No nor in A Judgment of Charity in a Regenerate State and they may be Persecuted by the Enemies of Christianity As being Such Professors of it as I have once and Again Described Who yet Never Professed themselves to be Savingly Converted or gave good Evidences that they were So or were by their Enemies Considered as Such but only as People of a Religion which they hated. And the Apostle may be Supposed to Speak of them as Persons that were Perswaded that the Doctrines of the Christian Religion were true and the Principles of it were good and of Whom Some were truly Godly and Should be Saved without Intending that in A Judgment of Charity they were all Such And So Such as Should be Saved either all that belonged to the House of God or all that were Persecuted by the Enemies of Christianity.

Mr. Edwards goes on Page 19th and Sayes “(7) That the Visibility was not Meerly of Moral Sincerity but of that Sort of Saintship which the Saints in Heaven have is Manifest by this that they are often Spoken of as Visibly *belonging to Heaven*. So the Apostle in his Epistle to the Ephesians Speaks of them as Visibly of the Same Household or Family of God part of which is in Heaven. Chapter 2:19, *Now Therefore ye are No more Strangers and Foreigners but fellow Citizens with the Saints and of the Household of God*. Together with the Next Chapter Vers 15, of Whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is Named. W[h]ere the Context and Continuation of the Discourse Demonstrates that he is Still Speaking of the Same Household he had Spoken of in the Latter part of the Preceeding Chapter. So all Visible Christians are Spoken of as Visibly the Children of the Church Which is in Heaven. /62/ Galatians 4:26, *Jerusalem which is Above is free which is the Mother of us all*. The Same [apostle

<sup>66</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:194-95.

speaks] of Visible Christians as being Visibly come to the Heavenly City and having Joined the Glorious Company of *Angels there* and as Visibly belonging to the *General Assembly* and Church of the *first born* that are *Written in Heaven*”<sup>67</sup> & There are Under this Head More Quoted Much like those and with the Design as those are Alleged for but I think I need Not Transcribe the Whole Paragraph. It does sufficiently by What I have resited Appear What in Such Texts do hold really forth or implied, and what Mr. Edwards would Infer from them. And Now in Answer to What is here Said I say

1. I grant in Such Texts the Members of the Visible Church Spoken to and of in them are Spoken of as belonging to the Same Church or Assembly that is Partly in Heaven and Partly on Earth. But then it may be Inquired Whether what is So Said is Spoken to all the Members of the Churches Spoken to or Unto Such of them only as are Converted and in A State of Grace. If it be Said only to those now Mentioned Mr. Edwards gains by them no help in his Cause but if it be Said that Such Things are Spoken to all the Members of the Visible Churches Spoken to them of their being Such as by their Profession they Should be and So According to A Judgment of Christian Charity; Which Seems to be what Mr. Edwards Intends by his Speaking on every Turn as *Visibly Such*. I Say if this be what is intended it is not granted that this is the Meaning of the Texts Alleged. There is Nothing in them to Oblige us to put Such a Construction on them Nor is it true that all the Members Either Do or Should Profess themselves to be in A regenerate State or are in A Judgment of Charity So. And besides What I have now Said there be Other and better Reasons given for which all the Members of Visible Churches may be Spoken of in Such a Manner as in the Texts Under Consideration then that by Mr. Edwards So much Insisted on As I have Already Shewed and Shall further Make Evident. And Now I Shall Take Leave to Ask a few Questions viz. (1) Whether Such Members of the Visible Church here on the Earth as are Endowed with Saving grace /63/ are not Brethren of the Saints and Angels that are in Heaven? (2) Whether Such as are Members of the Church of Christ on Earth tho not in a Converted State are Not Brethren of Converted Church Members and this too while they give no good Evidences of Regeneration? (3) If Such are Brethren to those whose Brethren be in Heaven (being one Body with them) will it not follow that they are Brethren to those in Heaven? Also (4) Whither if the Affirmative here be granted does this not Suppose a very Near Relation betwixt God and all the Members of his Visible Church both the Converted and Unconverted? (5) Whether Such a Relation betwixt God and his Visible Church on Earth is Not Abundantly Asserted in the holy Scriptures Where Such are Called his Spouse or Wife his Servants his Children his Saints Christs Disciples his Brethren? See [Isaiah] 54:5, Jeremiah 3:14, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Malachi 1:6, Deuteronomy 14:1 & Chapter 32:18, Galatians 3:26. The words of this Last Text Seem to be Spoken to that Whole Church. Or (6) If whole Visible Churches may be thus Addressed Then Whether the Whole may Not be Denominated from the better Part as a heap of Wheat and Chaff Together may be Called a heap of Wheat tho there may be more Chaf than Wheat?

<sup>67</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:195.



Mr. Edwards goes on in Page 20 “That Baptism by which the Primitive Converts were Admitted into the Church was Used as an Exhibition or Token of their being Visibly Regenerated Dead to Sin Alive to God having the Old Man Crucified Being Delivered from the power of Sin being made free from Sin and become the Servants of Righteousness those Servants of God that Have their fruit unto holiness whose end is Everlasting life as is Evident by Romans 6 Throughout.”<sup>68</sup>

I Answer unto this that I Deny What Mr. Edwards here Affirms. It does not Appear by Anything Said in this Sixth Chapter of the Romans either in the words Alluded Unto or Elsewhere to be found that When the Members of that Church were Baptised and Admitted into it their Baptism was Used as an Exhibition and Token of their being Visibly regenerated or that the Baptised were According to a Judgment of well grounded Charity born of the Spirit and in A State of Salvation as /64/ Mr. Edwards Supposes the words he Alludes to do Imply. The words Shews there no Such Thing. They Seem indeed to Shew that there is in Baptism a Representation of Such a thing as *Death unto Sin and living unto Righteousness* and So in that Baptism which the Church of Rome had received and thus it was true that Supposing they had the thing that is Signified by Baptism as Perhaps many of them had tho they had as well as the Outward Sign it would then follow that they were Such as the words Seem to Suppose them to be. But if the words be taken Strictly According to their literal Sense then all the Members of that Church were Really in A State of Salvation which Mr. Edwards does not hold they did intend for he takes them to Mean that they to whom they were spoken were all Visibly or in a Judgment of Charity in that State but this I Suppose is not to be Allowed nor Can be proved. The Charecter given of Some of them in the Epistle itself will not Agree with that Opinion. See Chapter 2:1-5 & Chapter 3:1-4. To Say that this Whole Church were According to a Judgment of Charity a Company of Converted Men & Women is to Say more then Can be any Way made good by anything that is Said of them either when they were first Admitted into A Church State or at any Other Time Tho they are Spoken of as A Company of Saints, Romans 1:7, As Other visible Churches also frequently are. What I have Said Under the Last foregoing Head is also Applicable to the State of this Christian Church of Rome Notwithstanding anything thus far Said to the Contrary. But let Us hear what he further Says. “In the former part of the Chapter he (the Apostle) Speaks to the Christian Romans as *Dead to Sin being buried with Christ in Baptism having their old Man Crucified with Christ.*”<sup>69</sup> And they Seem indeed to Shew that in Baptism there is a Representation of *Death Unto Sin and living unto Righteousness* and that this holds true with Respect to that Baptism which the Church of Rome had received and Consequently Supposing they had the thing Signified by Baptism as well as the outward Sign of it. They were Such as they Seem in the words recited to be Said to be, and that all of them Really and not in Appearance and in a Judgment of Charity Only, as Mr. Edwards Supposeth, if the

<sup>68</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:196.

<sup>69</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:196.

Whole Church being Intended. And I Cannot think the word Spoken to them Can be justly Supposed to Intend that, that all the Members of that Church were in a Judgment of Charity in A /65/ Regenerate State at the time the Apostle thus wrote to them, nor yet at the Time of their first Admission into A Church Relation, and So Such as Should be looked Upon as were in the Most Strict Sense Gods Sons and Daughters & Heirs of Eternal life and Blessedness. I think the Charecter given of Some of them, Chapter 2:1-5 and 3:1-4, To Say that this whole Church were in A Judgment of Charity a Company of Converted People is I think to Say More in their Praise than Can be made good Concerning them or any Other Visible Church on Earth tho the Apostle Wrote to them as to A Company of *Saints*, Chapter 1:7, Which is A proper *Stile* belonging to Churches as Seems to Appear by Many Texts of Scripture as by the Inscription of Several of the Epistles and by Other Texts as Deuteronomy 7:6 & Chapter 14:2 and 1 Corinthians 14:33. And What I have Said Under the Last foregoing Head is I think Applicable to the State of this Christian Church of *Rome* Notwithstanding anything hitherto Said to the Contrary. Yet I will Consider what Mr. Edwards Says farther in this Paragraph viz. In the former Part of this Chapter he (the Apostle) *Speaks of the Christian Romans as Dead to Sin being Buried with Christ in Baptism having their Old Man Crucified with Christ* &c. He dont mean only that their Baptism laid them Under Special Obligations to those things and was a Mark or Token of their Engagement to be thus hereafter but was designed as a Mark or Token and Exhibition of their being Visibly thus Already as is Most Manifest by the Apostles Prosecution of the Same Argument in the following part of the Chapter Verse 14, For Sin Shall not have Dominion over you for ye are not Under the Law but Under grace. Verse 17-18, But God be thanked that ye were the Servants of Sin but ye have Obeyed from the heart that form of Doctrine which was Delivered you. Being then Made free from Sin ye Became Servants of Righteousness. Vers 22, But Now being Made free from Sin and Become Servants to God Ye have your fruit Unto holiness and the end everlasting Life &c. By way of Reply to what is here Said I would humbly Inquire (1) Whether What is here Said is Spoken to the Whole Church and all the Members of it or only Unto Such as were truly Godly Among them? If the last of those be Allowed this would /66/ Not help Mr. Edwards Cause nor is What he thinks. Therefore (2) and were what is here Said a truth with Respect to all the Churches Spoken to where they really Such as According to the litteral Sense of the word they are described to be I believe the Affirmative will not be Asserted. (3) If the Meaning of the words then that all the Members of this Church were in Appearance and According to a Judgment true Saints Mr. Edwards if he had opportunity for it would Acknowledge that they were Not Such when the Apostle wrote to them but would I Suppose Say they were Such when they were Admitted Members of it. But this is Not what the Text Says for the Text has a plain Reference to their State Since they were Baptised and were become Church Members. If therefore it be Understood literally It proves too much for Mr. Edwardss Turn and will do him No Service. But he still Harps Upon the Word Visible and Says that they were Visibly Such as they are here discribed to be and he means they were al So (at l[e]ast) if the Church walked by rule in their Admission. But I think that this is not yet Proved by this or Any Other Portion of Scripture. I think that this Shews rather this what Churches Should be Considered as

Professing and Baptised Christians than What they Actually were. Let others Judge. But Mr. Edwards Asserts that the design the Apostle in the word was to Shew what they *already* were not what they Should be *Hereafter*. If Mr. Edwards Means by What that Persons are not or Should not be Admitted to the Priviledges of a Church State on the Account of Qualifications not at Present in being but Promised to be *hereafter* Come up Unto I readily grant this. But I do not think that Saving holiness either Already in Mens hearts or Promised by them to be hereafter Obtained is what Entitles them to Membership in the Visible Church Nor this kind of holiness made Visible by Mens Affirming themselves to be the Subjects of it According to Mr. Edwards Hypothesis.

I will here only further Say that I think it is Enough from this Portion of Scripture (Romans 6) to /67/ Assert that this Church of Rome had by their baptism their being in a State of Grace Sealed unto them Supposing them to have been regenerate Saints with respect to which they were Obligated to Examine themselves as the Church of Corinth also was, 2 Corinthians 6:13. I do not Conceive that the thing or truths, that was by their Baptism Sealed to them was that they were in Appearance or According to a Judgment of Charity in a State of Salvation. If this had been what the Seal of Baptism had been Applied to them to Confirm they would have had no good Assurance of a happy State given to them and by it I think that in Baptism Such as are Duly Admitted to it have therein the truth of Gods Covenant Promises Sealed to them and they on their part *Seal their Professed Subjection* to the *Gosple of Christ* Acknowledging themselves to be the Servants of the Lord and Promising Obedience to his Laws. But I do not think that all this Amounts to So much as Mens Professing that they are Already Savingly Converted.

I come now to Mr. Edwards last Argument in his *Humble Inquiry* Against the Opinion Which I endeavour to Defend. And he Says in his 21 page “’Tis evident that it is not only a Visiblity of Moral Sincerity in Religion Which is the Scripture Qualification of Admission into the Christian Church but a Visiblity of Regeneration and Renovation of heart because it was *foretold* that Gods People and the Ministers of his house in the Days of the Messiah that Gods People and Minister Should Not Admitt into the Christian Church any that were Uncircumcised in Heart, Ey [Ezekiel] 44:6 to the 9, And thou Shalt Say to the rebellious even to the house of Israel Thus Saith the Lord God O ye house of Israel, let it Suffice you of all your Abominations In that Ye have brought into my Sanctuary Strangers Uncircumcised in heart and Uncircumcised in flesh to be in my Sanctuary to Pollute it even my house when ye Offer my bread the fat and the blood and they have Broken my Covenant because of all your Abominations. And ye have not kept the Charge of mine holy Things but ye have Set Keepers of my Charge in my Sanctuary for yourselves. /68/ Thus Saith the Lord God No Stranger Uncircumcised in heart nor Uncircumcised in flesh shall Enter into my Sanctuary of any Stranger that is Among the Children of Israel.”<sup>70</sup> I reply I acknowledge that what *Mr. Edward* has Said under this head has Some Appearance of

<sup>70</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:196-97.

Strength in it and I Shall Endeavour to give him A fair and Just Answer to what he Says. I agree in my Judgment with him that the words now recited are a Prediction of the Purity and good Order of the Church of God in its Gosple State of it and that this Should be Discovered by the Care that Should be taken not to Admitt into it Such as are in the words under Consideration intended by the *Uncircumcised in heart and in flesh* and it is also Evident by Sixth vers the first in the words quoted that it had been a very Great fault in the Jewish Church in times Past that they had not Shut Such out of the house of God; So that as to this the rule is the Same Under the *Old Testament* and the New. Now by what I have said it Appears that the Question as it lies betwixt Mr. Edwards and me (for I am not Concerned to Defend what Others have Said<sup>71</sup>) is Who are these Persons Who are Said to be *Uncircumcised in heart & flesh* and Which ought to be Debarred from Coming into the house, or Church of God?

Now Mr. Edwards takes it for granted that by the Circumcision of the heart in the place under Consideration the Same thing is Intended as is Elsewhere in Scripture Called and Intended by Mens being born Again or born of the Spirit and that by it Such a Change as Always Accompa[ny]ing Eternal Salvation. He Accordingly Says in Page 22 below the Middle “I Suppose it will not be Doubted but that by Circumcision of heart is Meant the Spirituall renewall of the heart /69/ not any common Vertues which don’t in the lest Change the Nature and Mortify the Corruptions of the heart as All Orthodox Divines and Mr. Stoddard in Particular Abundantly Insisted.”<sup>72</sup> But whether this Opinion be true or Not Must be Decided by the Law and the Testimony. For my part I at present think that by the Circumcision of the heart Such a Change of it is Not Always in Scripture intended Nor is So in the Place now Under Consideration. I Acknowledge that in Some Texts it is So to be Understood as in Deuteronomy 30:6 And in A text here Alledged by Mr. Edwards Page 22 Viz. Colossians 2:11-12 and Perhaps in Some Other. But I think that there are Several Places in Which the Circumcision of the Heart Cannot be So taken but Must be Understood of A Change of A lower kind and that this Text in Ezechiel Must be So Understood too.

And to Make way for the Making of this Evident I shall before I instance in the Texts I intend Observe as I have Done Before that it is frequent in Scripture to Call the Common Graces of the holy Spirit by the Same Names as Special Saving graces are Also Called by, in the word of God So that Which of these is intended in this or that Text Can Seldom Or Never be Determined by the Name by which it is Called but must be Judged of by the Context or Coherence of the Places wherein Such words are Used. I have Already given Instances in Such words as Believers Saints Christians Disciples &c. and I am not willing here to repeat Very Much of what I have already Said. Now I think that the Same is true With respect to this Phrase of the Circumcision of the heart as it Sometimes Signifies A

<sup>71</sup> Mayhew was referring to Solomon Stoddard and the argument advanced in his *Appeal to the Learned* (10), which Edwards criticized in the next paragraph of *Humble Inquiry* (WJE 12:197).

<sup>72</sup> Edwards, *Humble Inquiry*, WJE 12:198.

Saving Change Wrought in the hearts of Sinfull Men by the Spirit of God So in Some Texts A Change of a lower Nature or kind is Intended by it. Of the former of these Instances have been Already given and Need Not be repeated; /70/ nor is this doubted of by Any that are concerned in this Debate. I Shall therefore here only Instance in two of the Sort Last Mentioned and they are these viz. Deuteronomy 10:16, Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart and be no more Stiffnecked & Jeremiah 4:4, Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and take away the foreskin of your Heart &c. I might here Mention other Texts of this Sort if Need were. On these Texts and others like them I Say that they Cannot intend the Change wrought in *Regeneration or the New Birth*.

1. Because that which is required in them is Expressly required to be wrought by Sinners in themselves as the work of Regeneration is Not but is wrought by the Mighty power of God. That the Change in these Texts intended is required to be wrought by Sinners themselves is in both of them as plain as I can desire that they Should be for my purpose. But God never did nor never will require any Sinner to work a Regenerating Change in his own heart. To do this is Gods own work and his Alone. The Sinner is not a Coworker with him. The Sinner has no hand in Creating himself Anew unto Good works Nor does God require this of him Nor to put to this work his helping hand but takes it wholly on himself. Therefore this Cannot be the Same that is required in the Texts Above Quoted. See and Compare the Texts quoted in the Margin. Ezekiel 36:26, Psalm 51:10, Ephesians 2:10, John 1:13, Ephesians 1:19, 20.<sup>73</sup>

To require a Sinner thus to Circumcise his own heart is in Effect to require him to be God, for none but one that has a Power equal to the Power of God Can do this as Appears if we Compare the Texts Above referred unto by which it Appears that Sinners are wholly Passive while they Undergo this wonderfull Change as many Eminent Divines have Abundantly Asserted. See our Mr. *Nortons Orthodox Evangelist* Chapter 12 Entitled The Soul Passive in Vocation.<sup>74</sup>

/71/ 2. As this is that which Sinners themselves are Required to Do So it is required of them in order to their Obtaining Eternal life. This is Evident in that Text but Now Mentioned, Jeremiah 4:4, and in many Other of the Same Importance As that in Ezekiel 18:31, 32, *Make you a New heart for why will ye Die. Turn yourselves and live ye*. I dont think that when Sinners are required to make themselves A New heart the Same thing is required of them as is Intended in other Texts by Gods Creating New and Clean hearts in them and Creating them Anew in Christ Jesus Unto Good works and his putting his Spirit into them as in the Texts in the Margin refered to. To do this is Gods Work but the Other is required to be done by themselves Nor are ever any Adult Persons Saved in Gods Ordinary way without doing this. Whereas No Man ever did or Could Regenerate himself it Must be

<sup>73</sup> Mayhew wrote these scriptural citations in the margin and marked them for insertion here with an asterisk.

<sup>74</sup> John Norton, *The Orthodox Evangelist* (London: John Macock, 1654), 257-83.

Confessed Indeed that No Man Can do this without Gods help and Influence and I believe that none but Gods Elect ever do it but Still they are formally Doers of it. It is the Sinner himself who must do the things required of him.

3. This I doubt not is what is in differing Terms required of Sinners on Pain of Death in Many Other Texts of Scripture as in Colossians 3:5, Mortify &c. Romans 8:13, If ye live &c. And we are Accordingly told in Galatians 5:20, That they that are Christs have &c. And nothing less than this is by our Lord required of Every Sinner upon pain of damnation. Matthew 5:29, 30, If thy right Eye Offend thee Pluck it out & Cast it from thee &c. A Sinner must do this in Order to his being Saved and Must not delay it till he is /72/ in a State of Salvation nor is he in this required to Regenerate himself. For to give him a New heart is God's work and is Salvation itself not the Condition required of Man in order to his Salvation. For it is by *washing of Regeneration* that God Saves a Sinner, Titus 3:5. And the Change wrought in our own Regeneration, does in order of Nature follow After our faith and Repentance as I have Elsewhere Abundantly Proved.<sup>75</sup> I here mean that Act of Faith by which we are Justified.

Now that by the *Circumcision* of the heart in the place that has been Mentioned in Ezekiel Chapter 44 the work of Regeneration is not Intended I Shall Unto what I have already Said here further Add what here follows (1) That it is Clear and Evident in the Portion of Scripture Under Consideration In Ezekiel 44 that the Scope and Design of it is to foretell a happy Reformation of What is therein Spoken of as having been Amis and Very Blameworthy in the Jewish Church in their not having Observed the Charge that had been given to them with respect thereunto. (2) One thing which the guides of that Church are Especially blamed for was their Admitting into the Sanctuary or house of God Strangers who were *Uncircumcised* both in *Heart* and in *Flesh* to Prophane the good and holy things belonging thereunto Contrary to the Charge that had been given to them by Moses and Other Servants of his. This is Evident in the Sixth Seventh and Eighth Verses. Now by the Strangers /73/ And *Uncircumcised* here Spoken of the best Exposition I have, Understand Prophain and Vicious Heathen who had not received the Token of the Covenant and Badge of the Religion of the Jews and So were no Regular Proselyts and none Can Doubt but that the Admitting of these was very Contrary to the Law of God given by Moses And Explained by others of Gods Servants. (3) But there can nothing be found in the Laws of Moses forbidden [forbidding] the Admitting into the house of God Persons Not born of the Spirit and in a Regenerate State or in a Judgment of Charity Such and So Circumcised in Heart in the Sense Mr. Edwards Intends. It does not Appear to Me by Anything I have yet Seen that the Jewish Church were forbidden to Admitt any into their Communion Who were not Circumcised in heart in the Sense I have but Now Mentioned. (4) It follows that the Prediction of A Time to Come Wherein What had been Amis in times Past Should be reformed cannot be Justly Supposed to Intend that Such Should not be Admitted into the

<sup>75</sup> See, for example, [Mayhew], *Right to the Lord's Supper Considered*, 8-9.

Church Which is the house of God as do not Appear to be Savingly Converted as Mr. Edwards Understands the words. Tho God in the Text Mentioned Says No Stranger *Uncircumcised* in heart and Uncircumcised in flesh Shall Enter into my Sanctuary Yet I think I have plainly Shewn that persons may be Said to be Circumcised in heart or not So in a differing Sense than that by Mr. Edwards Intended and Insisted on i.e. in A sense in which they may be Said by the help of God to Circumcise their own hearts.

/73a/ Thus Sir I have considered the first Argument insisted on By Mr. Edwards in his *Humble Inquiry* to Make good What he Undertook To prove which is what I undertook to do in this Letter to you That Containing the Sum of All that he has Said in the rest of his book and being as I may Say that by which his Sense is Opened in All his following Arguments So that it Seems to Me that all that he hath Said in his long Discourse will Either Stand or fall According to his Success in that part of his Book which I have taken under Serious Consideration. I Shall therefore here make a Stop in Hopes you will please to hint Some of Your thoughts to Me of what I have here Said by which I may know the Better what to Do Hereafter.

The Sum of the Matter as it now Stands is, that Mr. Edwards holds that No Person is really and in the Sight of God qualified for full Communion in the Visible Church who is Not Savingly Converted and in A State of Salvation and Consequently that none but what are Visibly or in Appearance Such ought by the Church of Christ to be Admitted into her Communion. And he Judges that if this last be make good it will from thence follow that Unconverted Persons have no right in the Sight of God to be Admitted to full Communion & the Consequence here I grant but the Antecedent I deny & think Mr. Edwards has not proved it by Any thing that he has Said in the Argument which I have Considered tho he has endeavoured to do it for I hope I have Sufficiently Answered what he has thus far said.

I am not yet Convinced that Professors of Religion /74/ Ought to be Admitted into the Visible Church on the Account of their being truly Pious or Savingly holy or as Mr. Edwards frequently Speaks Under that Notion. I mean I do not think that this is that without which they may Not be Admitted. If I could be Convinced that I am Mistaken in this I dont know but that I must give up the Cause as Lost and Leave the Field but if this be not made good by Anythink [anything] Said by Mr. Edwards in his first Argument I doubt not but that his Other Ten Arguments may all of them be fairly Answered. And in Answer to them I Should if I had Occasion and if I had life and health Should Say & Affirm (1) That Persons may be really in Covenant with God who are not Savingly Converted. (2) That the Christian religion may be professed without a Profession of A gracious Respect to Jesus Christ if by this be Understood Such a respect or Love to him as is Peculiar Unto Such as are Savingly Converted and that According to the Nature of things Such a Profession is not Necessary to Church Communion. (3) That we find not in the Scripture that all those of Gods Professing People who are Not truly Pious or Savingly Converted are represented as having Guile and as being *deceitful Hypocrites*. Such may be excepted as Never pretended to be Savingly Converted if Not Such also as are really perswaded that they are Converted and by the Church Judged to be so. (4) That Mr. Edwards has not well proved that by persons *Joining*

*themselves Unto the Lord* in Isay [Isaiah] 56:1-8 their being Savigly Converted is intended or implied or that this is Necessary in Order to their Admission into the Visible Church. Persons may Join themselves to the Lord in A sense Agreeable to the Scripture who are Not in a Converted State. (6) The Representations which Jesus Christ from time to Time Makes of his visible Church in his Discourses and Parables which do not make that Evident he Pleads for. (7) It does not Appear by what in fact took place in the Manner and /75/ Circumstances of the Admission of Members into the Primitive Christian Church and the Profession made in Order to their Admission that they were Admitted Under the Notion of their being truly Godly and in a State of Salvation. (8) [It] is not Apparent by the Epistles of the Apostles to the Primitive Christian Churches and their Manner of their *Addressing* and *Treating* them that all those Churches were Constituted of Such Members as Mr. Edwards Represents them to have been. (9) The Christian Love required to be among Church Members does not Suppose them to be all According to a Judgment of Charity Savigly Converted. (10) It is not necessary in order to Persons partaking of the Lord's Supper that they Should Judge themselves to have Cordially Accepted of Christ if by this it be Intended that they have So believed on him that they are in a State of Salvation nor can this be Proved from that Text 1 Corinthians 11:28. Persons that are yet in an Unregenerate State may in Some Sort be Said really to have Accepted of Christ. Such may with the Moral Sincerity do this.

These things may be truly Said and Asserted in Opposition to what Mr. Edwards has endeavoured to prove in his Ten Arguments Which I at present Say no more unto. This Sir is all which I would present give You the trouble of Perusing and giving Your Censure on and it may be You may think this too Much for me to have Attempted: Who am

Your unworthy Servant

~~E. Mayhew~~

**Experience Mayhew to Thomas Foxcroft, February 21, 1755**

Chilmark, February 21, 1755

Reverend Sir,

I had the Favour of a very Kind and obligeing Letter from you, I think by Mr. Allen<sup>76</sup> of This Town. As for the Manuscript which you made me so Kind an offer about, I have been at some charge to get it transcribed by one that can write a better Hand that I can—but

<sup>76</sup> Col. John Allen (1682-1767) was a wealthy Martha's Vineyard land speculator, militia officer, sheriff, and judge. He married Margaret, the daughter of Chilmark minister William Homes, in 1716; they had twelve children, including Elizabeth, who married Experience Mayhew's son, Zechariah. Banks, *History of Martha's Vineyard*, 3:6.



when I came to see it, it was So unskilfully done, and so many Errours in the writing that I am ashamed to expose it to veiw, and had rather it Should be Seen in my own bad writing than in such a Dress as it has been put into. I [am therefore] a writing it over again myself, and making some small alterations in it, and if I am not discouraged, I know not but that I may give you & some others a sight of it. My Eyes are grown dim and I have no use of Spectacles, but if you can read what I now write you may perhaps read that. As for printing of it, I leave the Consideration of that till [hereafter]. It is Like there may be no way found for it. Scarse any will be at the charge of printing anything written by so old a man as I am, especially against an opinion of so great a Man as Mr. Edwards, tho one Liable to mistakes. I have read Mr. Edwards Book about Humane Liberty and am heartily sorry that he has fallen into so wrong a way of thinking as he seemes to me to have done nor do I think his book to be by any means defen[d]able And cannot but think his notions to be of a very dangerous Tendency, Tho I am at the same of Opinion that he is a precious servant of God.<sup>77</sup> As for anything he has said which Seemes directly to [*illeg.*] my Hypothes[is] I think I can see what may be Answered to it. But I have no thoughts of attempting an Answer to his Book.<sup>78</sup> There are great Troubles & Dissentions arisen in two of our churches [here viz.] *Edgartown* and *Tisbury*. How they will [fare] I know not. They need the help of the [*illeg.*] as [at others] for them. My son here goes on preaching acceptably, and I think gaining Ground on the Esteem of the Indians.<sup>79</sup> I have been [*two words illeg.*] unhealthy this winter, so that I have [failed] of preaching three Sabath Dayes. This [*two words illeg.*] is what I thought proper to write to you, who am still

Your humble and obliged servant

Experience Mayhew

Proverbs 14:3. In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride. See here, says Mr. Henry 1. a proud fool exposing himself. Where there is pride in the heart, & no wisdom in the head to Suppress it, it commonly Shews itself in words; in the mouth there is pride, proud boasting, proud censuring, proud Scorning, proud commanding & giving law; this is the rod or branch of pride. It grows from the root of bitterness which is the heart. Tis a rod from that stem. The root must be plucked up or we cannot conquer this branch or it is meant of a Smiting, beating rod. A rod of pride which Strikes others the proud man with his tongue lays about him & deals blows at pleasure but it will in the end be a rod to himself the proud man Shall

<sup>77</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of Will, which is Supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, Vertue, and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1754), WJE 1:129-439. Mayhew's treatise on "Humane Liberty" may be found among the Experience Mayhew Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>78</sup> Mayhew wrote the words "Turn over" at the bottom of the page.

<sup>79</sup> Zechariah Mayhew (ca. 1718-1806) preached to the Indians of Martha's Vineyard from the 1750s until his death. He married Elizabeth Allen in 1738; they had six children. Banks, *History of Martha's Vineyard*, 3:309.

come under an ignominious correction by the words of his own mouth—not Cut as a Soldier, but can'd as a Servant, & therein he Shall be beaten with his own rod. Psalm 64:8.<sup>80</sup>

'Tis not having the law but obeying & living up to it that will intitle us to blessedness. Henry Proverbs 29:18, page 359 top first column.<sup>81</sup>

Are all one upon the matter Viz. the Souls union with + [Christ]; the Lord is thine however & thou art his. 'Tis both a private & public Solem Marriage, if one thou know anything of it look not for Solemn Marriages evry Day. Hardly is the Renewal of a Covenant, which is frequent so glorious & Signal, as the first Marriage Day. Frasiers Life 229.<sup>82</sup>

Proverbs 18:9. He that is Slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.<sup>83</sup>

This is true in the Affairs of religion. He that is trifling & careless in praying & hearing is brother to him that doth not pray or hear at all; & omissions of duty & in duty are as fatal to the Soul as commissions of Sin. Henry.

### Experience Mayhew to Thomas Foxcroft, March 5, 1756

Chilmark, March 5, 1756

Reverend & much respected Sir,

I do not know but that you may think it a faltly neglect of due Regard, to you, that I have not all this while wrote anything to you about some Papers of Mine, which I signified to you I had in hand upon the Subject of Mr. Edwards's *Humble enquiry*. But I have been so infirm the Winter past that I have been able to do but very litle besides attending the work of my Ministry, which I have hitherto, through divine goodness been enabled, in some poor Manner to discharge. And besides this I have been discouraged about doing anything further in this affair, and this from a sence of my own weekness and insufficiency to manage well so weighty a cause, & not from any doubt of the goodness of it. However I have now prevailed with myself, to purpose to send you herewith some of my broken & confused Thoughts on Mr. Edwards's *first* Argument which I Look upon as the Key to all that follows

<sup>80</sup> Foxcroft turned Mayhew's letter sideways and used the blank space on the recto side to record extracts from theological treatises, including Matthew Henry's *Exposition of the Five Poetical Books of the Old Testament* (London: Thomas Darrack, 1710), s.v. Prov. 14:3.

<sup>81</sup> Henry, *Exposition of the Five Poetical Books of the Old Testament*, s.v. Prov. 29:18.

<sup>82</sup> James Fraser, *Memoirs of the Life of the Very Reverend Mr. James Fraser of Brea, Minister of the Gospel at Culross* (Edinburgh: Thomas Lumisden, 1738), 229-30.

<sup>83</sup> Henry, *Exposition of the Five Poetical Books of the Old Testament*, s.v. Prov. 18:9.

in his Book: And this Tho I am now in the 84 year of my Age, and both My head and hand grown very weak. But I consider that I put those papers into the hands of a Friend that will not improve them any ways to my Disadvantage, so that if they can do no good I hope they will do no hurt; And the utmost Good I can hope may be done by them is that there May be in them Some broken hints of things that may be usefull when du[e]ly explain'd & set in order by an Abler Hand. That what I could say on the subject might be more fairly Written than I could do it, I employed two others to write the same over, but it was done so inaccurately that I have been obliged to Let some of it goe in my own handwriting. I have at present no thoughts of Publishing anything written by me at this Age. If I can do any Good by Communicating any Thoughts of mine in a most Private way I shall be glad of it, & thankfull for it. I leave it to your Discretion to shew my paper to any other person or not, as you shall think best, so the same be returned again into your hand, to be returned to me, on my order. I can not yet learn what became of my former Letter, Mr. Bromfeild<sup>84</sup> had it & he was to deliver it to Mr. Prince.<sup>85</sup> My Papers, as you will See are stitched together in two parts, by reason of the Different size of the sheets. And the Matter of them is contained in two Parts or sections. The first of these Ends & the Second begins in the last of the Li[t]le booke on page 32. If you can read my papers, I intreat you to do it with your pen at your hand, & to correct such faul[t]s as you can without great Difficulty, and that you would Please to informe of the Grosser Faults. I shall endeavour to hear with Patience what my mistakes are And I hope willing to Amend what is amiss, [if] I am convinced. This is sir from

Your humble and much obliged Servant

Experience Mayhew

To the Reverend Mr. Thomas Foxcroft Pastour of a Church in Boston These

Reverend Mr. Experience Mayhew Received April 16, [17]56.<sup>86</sup>



<sup>84</sup> Edward Bromfield, Jr. (1695-1756) was a pious Boston merchant, public servant, commissioner in the New England Company for the Propagation of the Gospel, and member of the Old South Church. Bromfield married Abigail Coney in 1722; they had eight children. Thomas Prince preached his funeral sermon later in 1756. See Ashbel Woodward, comp., "Brief Memoirs and Notices of Prince's Subscribers," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 13 (1859): 35-36; Hamilton Andrews Hill and George Frederick Bigelow, comp., *An Historical Catalogue of the Old South Church (Third Church) Boston, 1669-1882* (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1883), 35; Kellaway, *New England Company*, 291; Thomas Prince, *The Case of Heman Considered* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1756).

<sup>85</sup> Descended from a prominent Sandwich, Massachusetts, family, Thomas Prince (1687-1758) graduated from Harvard College in 1707 and served as the minister of Boston's Old South Church for nearly four decades. A prolific author, respected theologian, and popular preacher, Prince was one of Edwards's most stalwart allies during the Northampton communion controversy. See "Thomas Prince," in *Biographical Sketches of Those Who Attended Harvard College in the Classes 1701-1712, with Bibliographical and Other Notes*, ed. Clifford K. Shipton, vol. 5, *Sibley's Harvard Graduates* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1937), 341-68.

<sup>86</sup> Endorsement in the hand of Thomas Foxcroft.