

## CHARITY & ITS FRUITS

### Sermon 10- Grace tends to holy practice

“Love...does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth” 1 Cor. 13:6

“In this verse sums up those and all other good tendencies of charity...By ‘iniquity’ (wrongdoing) seems to be intended everything which is sinful in life and practice, and by ‘truth’ is meant \_\_\_\_\_ which is good in life, or all Christian and holy practice.... Sometimes the word (truth) is used to signify all virtue and holiness (3 John 4).”

**Doctrine-** “All true Christian grace tends to holy \_\_\_\_\_.”

Every Christian virtue should lead to practice. Every Christian grace should lead to practice. Christianity is a practical religion...it is not mere philosophy or an academic exercise, but all elements of Christianity are meant to lead to “action”.

“Charity being here spoken of by the Apostle as the \_\_\_\_\_ of all true and sincere grace, the doctrine which has been observed, viz. that all true Christian grace tends to holy practice, is fully contained in the words of the text.”

Edwards then demonstrates how “all true Christian grace tends to practice” by focusing on 5 different elements of grace:

1. **Election-** “Good practice is not the \_\_\_\_\_ of election, as the Arminians suppose who imagine that God elects men upon a foresight of their good works. But Christian practice is the scope and end of election. Though God does not elect men because He foresees that they will live holy, yet He elects that they may live holy.”
2. **Redemption-** “Christ, by the great things which He did and suffered in the world, has \_\_\_\_\_ grace and holiness for the elect.”
3. **Effectual Calling-** “God converts them (the elect) and \_\_\_\_\_ grace into them for that end, that they might exercise themselves in holy practice.”
4. **Spiritual knowledge and understanding-** “A true knowledge of God and divine things is a practical knowledge...He who has a right and saving acquaintance with divine things sees the excellency of holiness, and of all the ways of holiness, for he sees the beauty and excellency of God which consists in holiness. And so he sees the hatefulfulness of the ways of sin. And if a man knows the hatefulfulness of the ways of sin, certainly this tends to his avoiding those ways. And if he sees the \_\_\_\_\_ of the ways of holiness, this tends to incline him to walk in them. He who knows God sees Him to be worthy to be obeyed.”
5. **Grace itself-** “It appears that all true Christian grace tends to practice, because the faculty which is the immediate sear of it is the faculty of the \_\_\_\_\_, which is the faculty that commands all a man’s actions and practice.”

Edwards then goes even further and demonstrates how particular “graces” (12 different graces) tend to holy practice:

1. **Saving faith in Christ-** “A true faith which \_\_\_\_\_, whereas a false faith is a barren and unoperative faith.”
2. **Goldy conviction-** “He who has true faith is \_\_\_\_\_ of the reality and certainty of the great things of religion.”
3. **The act of the will-** “He who by the act of his will does truly accept of Christ as a Savior accepts Him as a Savior \_\_\_\_\_ sin, and not only as a Savior from the punishment of sin. But it is impossible that anyone should heartily receive Christ as a Savior from sin and the ways of sin, if he is not one who sincerely has a mind to part with all the ways of sin.”
4. **Trust in God-** “All true trust in God tends to practice...he who truly and rightly trusts in God trusts in Him in a way of \_\_\_\_\_ and holiness, or, which is the same thing, in a way of holy practice.”
5. **True love-** “Love is an acting principle...he who truly loves God is influenced by that in his practice; he earnestly seeks God in the course of his life, seeks His favor and acceptance, and seeks His glory. Reason teaches that a man’s actions are the most proper trail and \_\_\_\_\_ of his love.”
6. **True repentance-** “Men are then said to repent of sin when they \_\_\_\_\_ their \_\_\_\_\_ with respect to sin; so that though formerly they esteemed it, and approved of it, now they utterly disapprove of it, and dislike it.”
7. **True humility-** “A humble heart tends to humble \_\_\_\_\_...True Christian humility of heart tends to make persons resigned to the will of God, patient and submissive to His holy hand under afflictions, full of awful

reverence toward the Deity, ready to treat divine things with great respect, and of a meek behavior towards men, condescending to inferiors and respectful towards superiors, gentle, easy to be entreated, not self-willed, not envious, but contented with his own condition, of a peaceable and quiet spirit, not disposed bitterly to resent injuries, but apt to forgive.”

8. **Fear of God-** “The principle thing meant by the fear of God in Scripture is a holy fear to \_\_\_\_\_ Him by sinning against Him.”
9. **A spirit of thankfulness-** “Sincere thankfulness to God tends to a rendering again according to the benefits \_\_\_\_\_.”
10. **Heavenly-mindedness-** “If the \_\_\_\_\_ be taken off from the world, it will tend to take off a man’s pursuits from the world; and if the heart be set on heavenly things, which are things that are not of the world, it will tend to cause a pursuit after those things.”
11. **Christian love to others-** “No other love to brethren but that which shows itself in deeds of love will \_\_\_\_\_ any man.”
12. **Christian hope-** “A true hope not only does not tend to harden men in sin, and make them more careless of their duty, but it tends to stir them up to holiness of life, to quicken them to duty, to make them more \_\_\_\_\_ to avoid sin, and more diligent and strict in serving God.”

“Every true Christian grace tends to a Christian life and walk; and it appears by these things that all grace has a \_\_\_\_\_ relation to a holy practice, as a root has to the plant which springs from it...”

### Application

1. **Instruction-** Understanding this truth will help us understand why good works are so insisted upon in the Scriptures as an \_\_\_\_\_ of grace
2. **Self-examination-** Here Edwards understands that the common experience for the saints when they examine themselves in this way will be one of despair. So, he uses the close of this sermon to encourage the saints.

“A Christians life may be attended with many and exceedingly great \_\_\_\_\_, and yet be a holy life, a truly Christian life.”

He then gives 7 different ways you can examine yourself to see if this saving grace is at work in you even though you maybe don’t feel as if it is:

1. Does your sin grieve you?
2. Does the prospect of future sins bother you?
3. Does holiness appear as pleasant and pleasing to you?
4. Do you take pleasure in those Christian practices of humility, self-denying, etc..?
5. Do you desire to do right according to God’s word?
6. Do you actually try to live a holy life?
7. Do you desire to know how God wants you to live?

“If you can honestly meet these tests, then you have the evidence that your grace is of the kind that tends to holy practice, and to growth in it. And though you may fall, through God’s \_\_\_\_\_ you shall rise again. He that hath begun a good work in you will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ. Though you may be, at times, faint, yet if pursuing, you shall be borne on from strength to strength, and kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.”