

SGF LADIES RETREAT 2014 – SHARON JAMES

Growing in Love for God

The Life of Sarah Edwards

"If God is for us, who can be against us?"

...who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Romans 8:31, 35

1. Sarah's life from 1710-1742

The historical context:

1703: Birth of Jonathan Edwards

1710: Birth of Sarah Pierrepont

1727: Marriage and move to Northampton

Sarah managed the home and farm, enabling Jonathan to spend 13-14 hours in his study per day preparing sermons.

1728: Birth of first of eleven children

2. Revival

1734-1742: Revival at Northampton

Sarah's intense experience of the love of God 1742.

- a) The reality of the love of God meant that Sarah was released from fearing the opinions of others.
- b) Her desire for the glory of God meant that she no longer minded whether it was her husband or another preacher who was more effective in ministry.
- c) The reality of the grace of God meant that she was liberated from judging others, rather, she felt genuine love towards everyone she knew.
- d) The reality of heaven meant that she could envisage the worst things that could happen in the future and not fear.

3. Challenges faced from 1742-1758

- 1744: War between France and Britain, conflict in North America
Financial problems
Controversy in the church
Family factions and hostility to the Edwards
- 1748: Death of daughter Jerusha, aged 17
- 1750: Dismissal from church at Northampton
- 1751: Move to frontier settlement at Stockbridge
- 1758: Deaths of son-in-law Aaron Burr, daughter Esther Burr, and Jonathan

4. Lessons for today

- a) Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom.8:35-39)
- b) Fear God, not other people (1 Pet.3:6, 13-15)
- c) Love others. Are we increasing in love for others? Or do we judge and censure others?
- d) Pray for and work for personal and corporate revival

Further reading

Sharon James: In Trouble and in Joy (Evangelical Press)

George M. Marsden: Jonathan Edwards: A Life (Yale Varsity Press)

Iain Murray: Jonathan Edwards (Banner of Truth)