



# Jonathan Edwards

## 2. Theological Project

REV. DR. MATTHEW EVERHARD, D.MIN

**Thesis:** In addition to the ordinary means of grace, Edwards's spiritual formation largely consisted in his personal "theological project."

# Early Pastoral Years (1722-1726)

Launching the Theological Project

New York Presbyterian 1722/23

Bolton, CT

Tudor, Yale

Northampton 1726

# Theological Project

1. Resolutions (1722)
2. Diary (1722)
3. Miscellanies (1722)
4. Notebooks: Images, Apocalypse, Messiah
5. "Blank Bible" (1730)

# 1. Theological Project: Resolutions

1. December 18, 1722 (Age 19)
2. Seventy Resolutions
3. Cross-Referenced to *Diary*
4. To Be Reviewed Weekly, Monthly, Yearly
5. Ends August 17, 1723 (8 months)

4. Resolved, never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God; nor be, nor suffer it, if I can avoid it.

5. Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can.

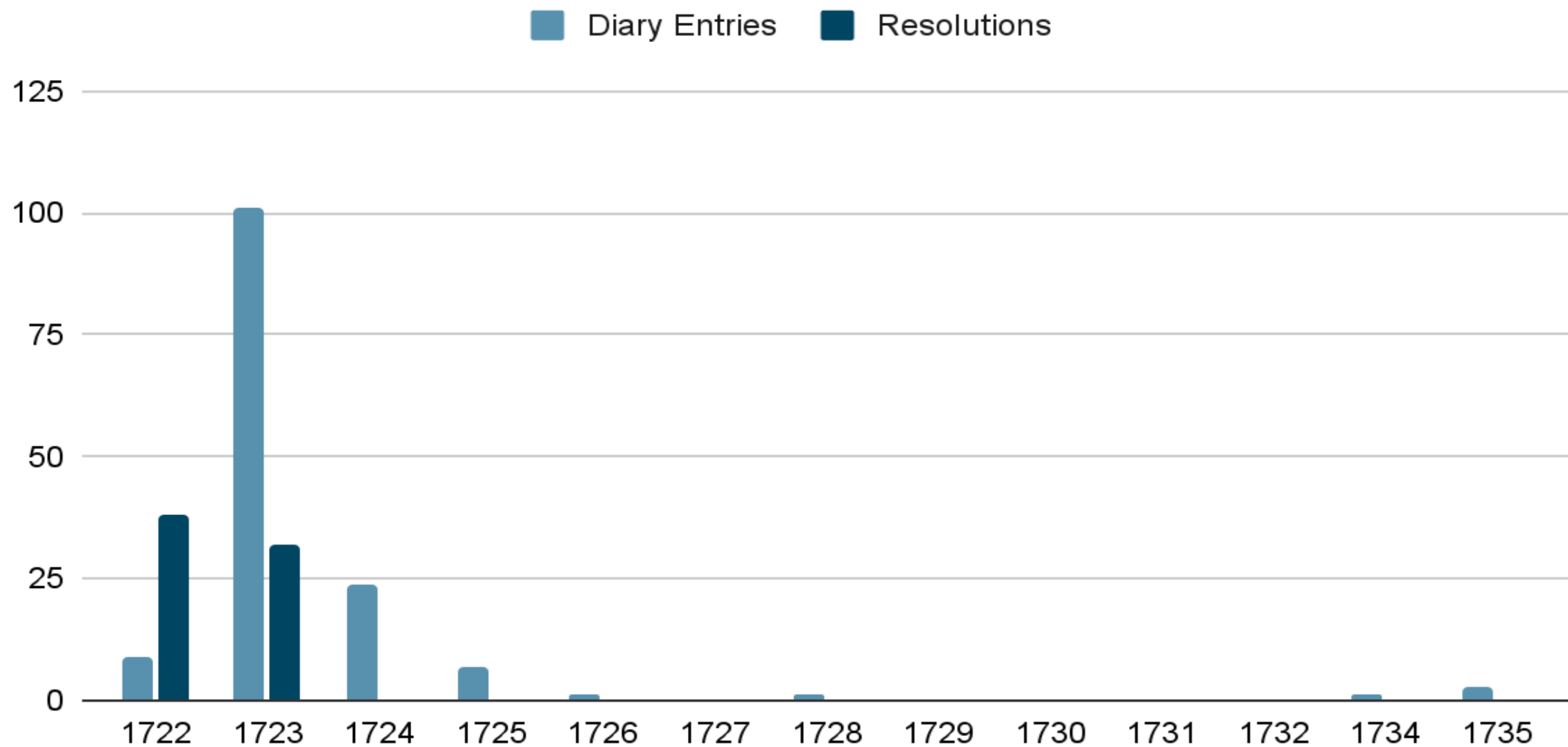
7. Resolved, never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last hour of my life.

15. Resolved, never to suffer the least motions of anger to irrational beings.

## 2. Theological Project: *Diary*

1. Begins same time as *Resolutions* (Dec. 18)
2. To track spiritual progress, not record events
3. 1723, 1724...slows to 1735

# Entries in the Diary per Year, 1722 - 1735



# Diary

Saturday, Jan. 12, in the morning. I have this day solemnly renewed my baptismal covenant and self-dedication, which I renewed when I was received into communion of the church. I have been before God; and have given myself, all that I am and have to God, so that I am not in any respect my own: I can challenge no right in myself, I can challenge no right in this understanding, this will, these affections that are in me; neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members: no right to this tongue, these hands, nor feet; no right to these senses, these eyes, these ears, this smell or taste. I have given myself clear away, and have not retained anything as my own. I have been to God this morning, and told him that I gave myself wholly to him. I have given every power to him; so that for the future I will challenge no right in myself, in any respect.

... I have this morning told him, that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; and would fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. And did believe in Jesus Christ, and receive him as a prince and a Savior; and would adhere to the faith and obedience of the gospel, how hazardous and difficult soever the profession and practice of it may be. That I did receive the blessed Spirit as my teacher, sanctifier and only comforter; and cherish all his motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort and assist me. This I have done. And I pray God, for the sake of Christ, to look upon it as a self-dedication; and to receive me now as entirely his own, and deal with me in all respects as such; whether he afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever he pleases to do with me, who am his.

Jan. 17, Thursday. About three o'clock, overwhelmed with melancholy.

Jan. 18, Friday. At night. Beginning to endeavor to recover out of the death I have been in for these several days.

Jan. 20, sabbath day. At night. The last week I was sunk so low, that I fear it will be a long time, 'ere I shall be recovered. I fell exceedingly low in the weekly account. I find my heart so deceitful, that I am almost discouraged from making any more resolutions. Wherein have I been negligent in the week past; and how could I have done better, to help the dreadful, low estate in which I am sunk?

# 3. Theological Project: Miscellanies

1. Begins 1722
2. 1412 total Entries
3. Continues until his death 1758
4. Theological “catch all”
5. Drafts for sermons, essays, books

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# Examples of Miscellaneous Topics

Heaven, Scriptures, Conscience, Pastors,  
Conversion, Sabbath, Freewill, Heaven,  
Covenant, Law, Israel, Happiness, Trinity, Lord's  
Day, the Fall, Love of Christ, Holy Spirit,  
Millennium, Satan, Demons, Antichrist,  
Justification, Hell, ...

### 3. HAPPINESS IS THE END OF THE CREATION,

as appears by this, because the creation had as good not be, as not rejoice in its being. For certainly it was the goodness of the Creator that moved him to create; and how can we conceive of another end proposed by goodness, than that he might delight in seeing the creatures he made rejoice in that being that he has given them? It appears also by this, because the end of the creation is that the creation might glorify him. Now what is glorifying God, but a rejoicing at that glory he has displayed? An understanding of the perfections of God, merely, cannot be the end of the creation; for he had as good not understand it, as see it and not be at all moved with joy at the sight. Neither can the highest end of the creation be the declaring God's glory to others; for the declaring God's glory is good for nothing otherwise than to raise joy in ourselves and others at what is declared. Wherefore, seeing happiness is the highest end of the creation of the universe, and intelligent beings are that consciousness of the creation that is to be the immediate subject of this happiness, how happy may we conclude will be those intelligent beings that are to be made eternally happy!

## 4. Theological Project: Other Notebooks

- a. Notes on Scripture (WJE 15)
- b. Images of Divine Things (WJE 11)
- c. The Mind
- d. Notes on the Apocalypse (WJE 5)
- e. Controversies (WJE 27)
- f. Messiah (WJE 11)
- g. Signs of True Godliness (WJE 21)



# a. Notes on Scripture

99. Romans 6:8–9. "Now if we be dead with Christ," etc. These two verses, with the context, seem irrefragably to prove perseverance.

100. Daniel 3:25. "And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Christ redeems from the furnace by coming into it himself; so he redeems from wrath by enduring it himself.

101. Job 26:7. "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." By stretching out "the north over the empty place," in the former part of the verse, seems to be meant the extending [of] the northern parts of the wide plain of the earth, as they took it to be, over an empty abyss of space, much the same as hanging the earth "upon nothing," in the latter part of the verse.

Jan 2 10 11 12 13 14. These Rivers which all flow into one and rise one way. I am sure that's  
changed by the great alteration the sea has made upon the land. The Lake of the coast  
and so these Rivers into the sea. I have not seen the sea since I was young, nor from the same place  
as I have seen it.

2 Math 13 39 The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed. 3. By the 3 measures I mean the whole world and the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed.

Math 21 41 When the Lord Jesus saw of the Vineyard and thought to manifest that the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed.

Gen 10 9 The measure which was used in the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed.

10 Math 13 39 The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man who sowed seed and hid it in 3 measures of seed with the white seed.

9 Math 3 7 Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? I have warned you to flee from the wrath to come. I have warned you to flee from the wrath to come. I have warned you to flee from the wrath to come.

10 Math 9 10 In the house which many Pharisees and Sadducees were sitting, Jesus said unto them, Be ye not afraid of the face of man, for he can kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. Neither is there any thing that shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

11 Math 10 13 And when ye go into a house, salute the brethren first. And when ye salute them, say, Peace be to you. And if the house be full of peace, your peace shall be established. But if it be not, your peace shall return to you.

Series I. Writings of Jonathan Edwards  
NOTEBOOKS AND MEMORANDA

Notes on the Scriptures  
Book 1, entries 1-290 / n.d.

Photo  
Credit:  
Tony  
Walker

## b. Images of Divine Things

35. The silkworm is a remarkable type of Christ, which, when it dies, yields us that of which we make such glorious clothing. Christ became a worm for our sakes, and by his death finished that righteousness with which believers are clothed, and thereby procured that we should be clothed with robes of glory. Vid. [no.] 46. See 2 Samuel 5:23–24 and Psalms 84:6; the valley of mulberry trees.

110. The awaking and crowing of the cock, to wake men out of sleep and to introduce the day, seems to signify the introducing the glorious day of the church by ministers preaching the Gospel. Many shall be awakened and roused to preach the Gospel with extraordinary fervency, to cry aloud and lift up their voices like trumpets...

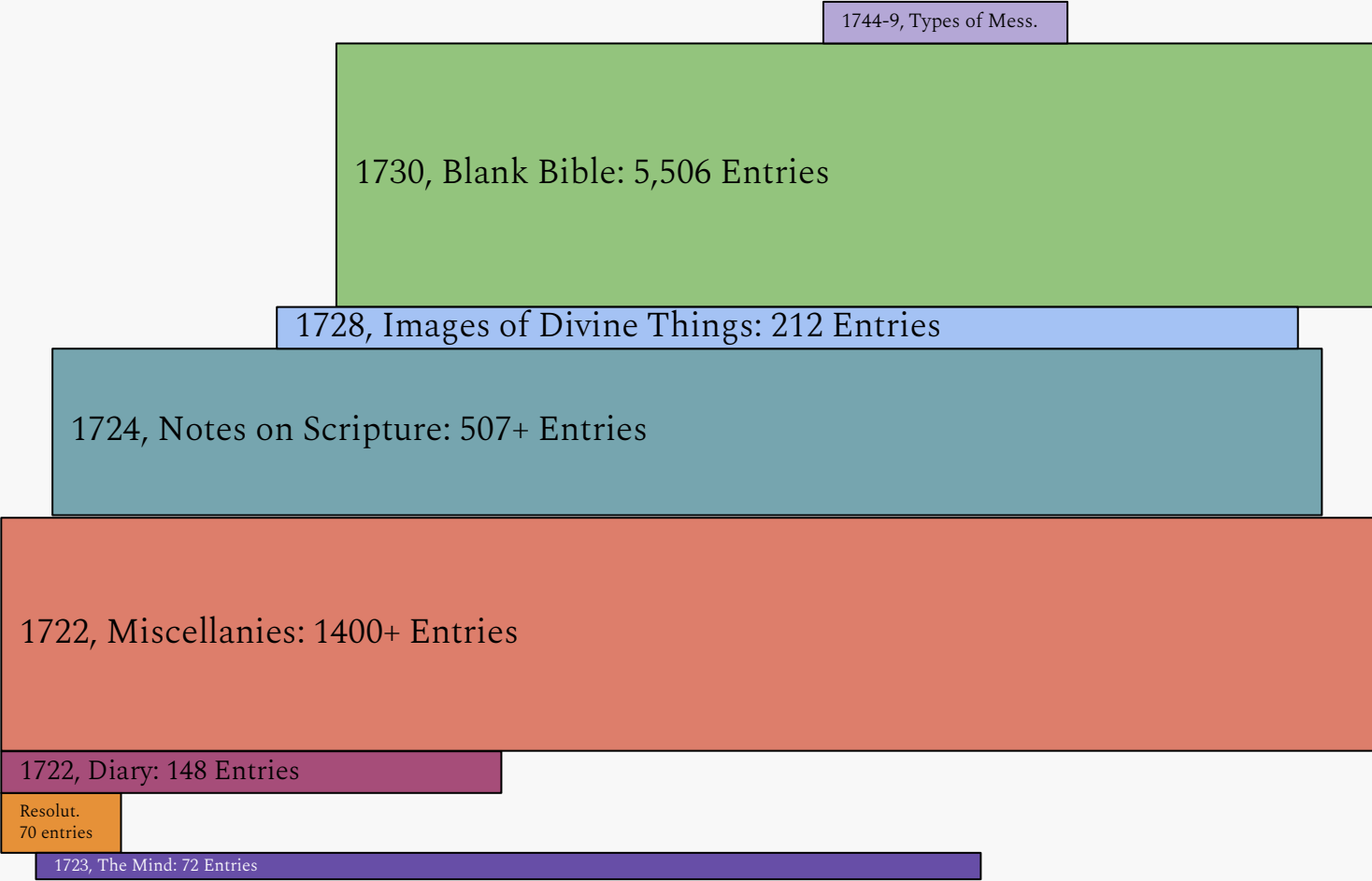
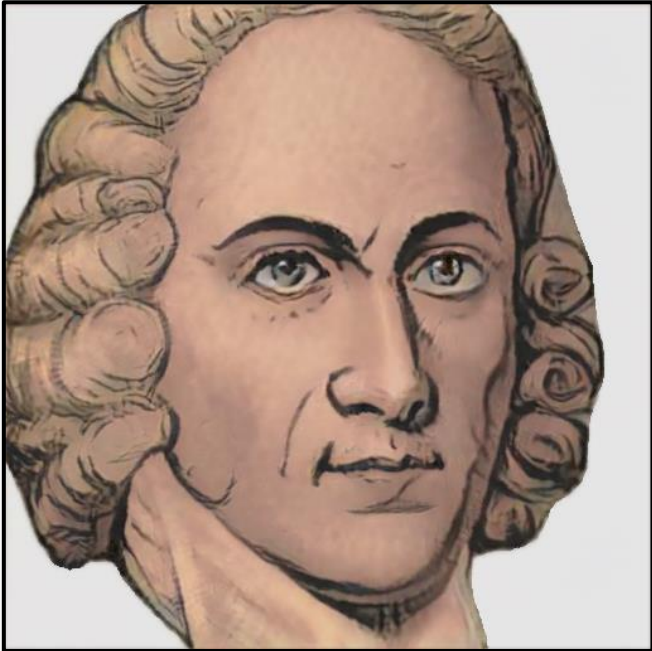


# 5. Theological Project: Blank Bible

1. Gift from Benjamin Pierrepont (1730)
2. Interleaved KJV
3. Running commentary on all of Scripture
4. Landing pad for all sorts of ideas
5. Cross-Reference location for all notebooks



# Edwards's Notebooks by Date and Entries



Birth		Conversion		Ordination	Local Revival	Great Awakening		Death
1703	1710	1720		1730		1740	1750	1758

Edwards's  
Master Note Plan  
Wilson H. Kimnach  
(WJE 10:90)

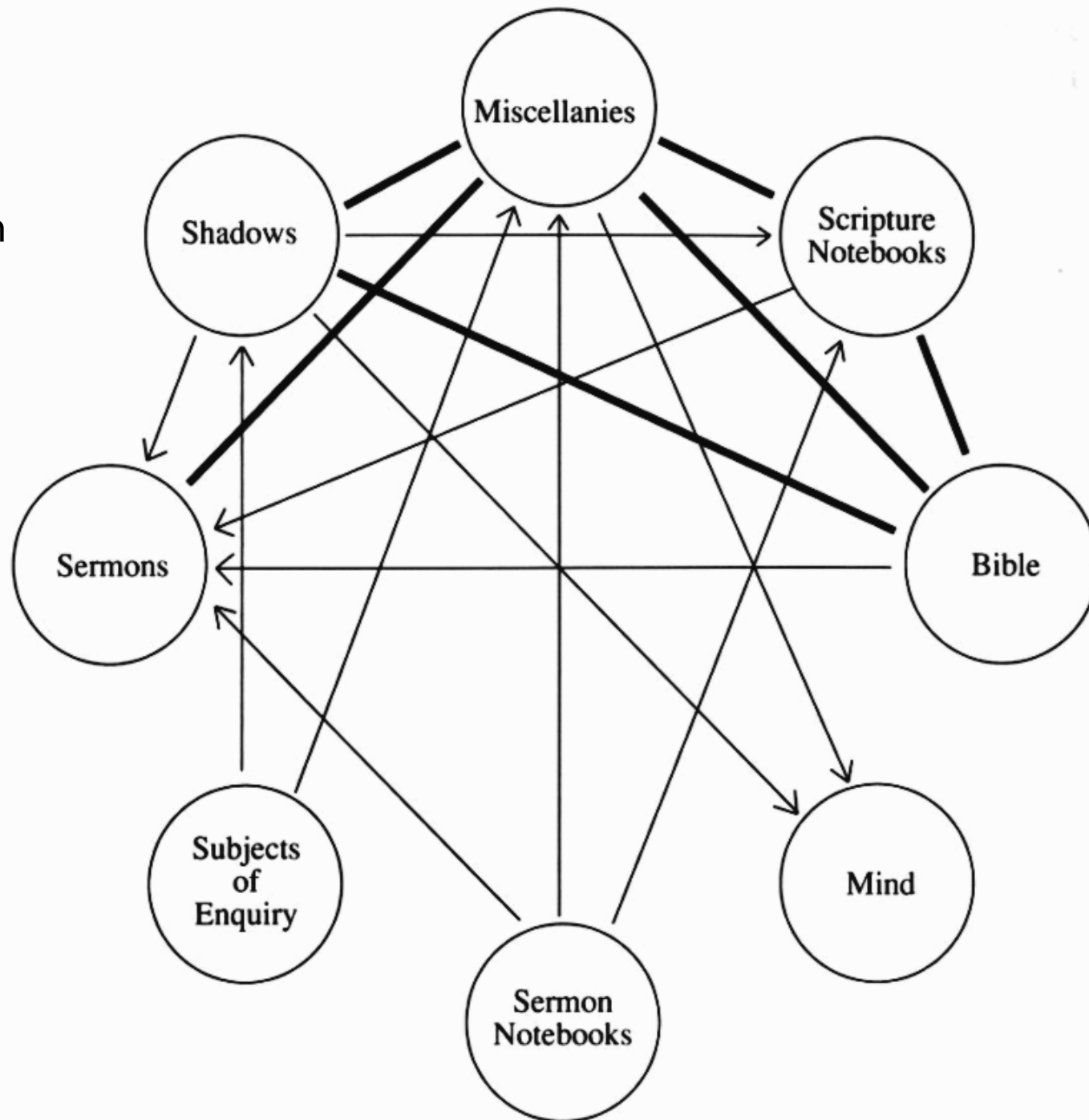




Photo  
Credit:  
Tony  
Walker

# Implementing Edwards's Model

1. Get a Wide Margin Bible!
2. Interleaved "Blank Bible" (Optional)
3. Miscellanies or Digital Miscellanies
4. Sermons
6. Essays, Articles, Books

