

book of the month | August 2025

Heaven is a World of Love

These upcoming months of slow methodical study through Revelation 21 and 22 on Sunday morning ought to be transformational for our church, as we look not to the transient *seen* things but the eternal *unseen* things. Considering eternity and the unmixed joy we will have there in God's perfect presence isn't worth comparing to the trials or temptations of today.

I have personally really enjoyed and benefited from slowly reading (and re-reading) Jonathan Edwards' *Heaven Is a World of Love*. It is another really well-done short book by Crossway Short Classics. It's based on a classic sermon from 1 Corinthians 13:8-10, "Love never ends..." Really, this is an extended meditation on our eternal state with God and what we know and ought to surmise from God's Word that time-without-end will be like: A world of love.

Edwards vividly portrays heaven as a realm entirely defined by the perfect and eternal love of God, a love that is eternal, ever-increasing, and intensely joyful. "Our delight in God will never reach a point at which there is no more for us to enjoy. If God is infinite... so is the satisfaction and pleasure that will come from beholding him moment by passing moment." Re-read that. This is true, if you are in Christ it's our future, and it is the greatest part of the good news that is the gospel: We will be with and enjoy God forever, loved by and manifesting the love of God by which and to which we have been saved!

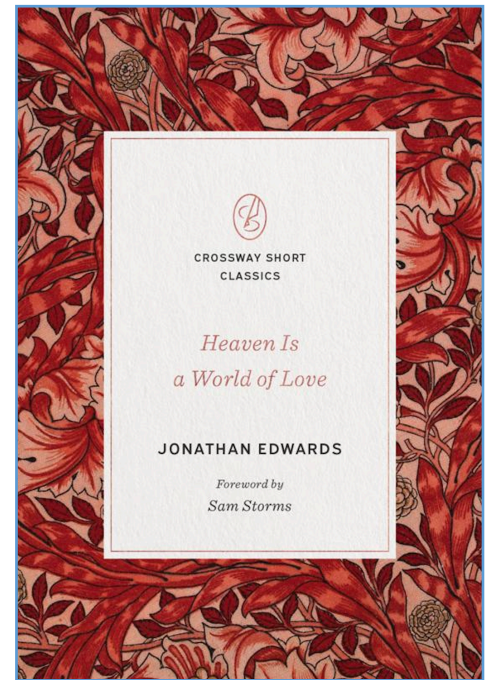
Edwards doesn't merely describe heaven; he helps us taste it. With characteristic depth and pastoral warmth, he traces how divine love flows from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as an infinite fountain, filling every heart in glory with perfect, unhindered affection. There will be no jealousy, no misunderstanding, no cooling of love, no barriers to its expression. This eternal perspective helps us endure trials, knowing that our present suffering is preparing us for an everlasting joy far beyond our greatest hopes.

As we long for heaven, Edwards reminds us that our knowledge of God's glory should continually grow and deepen, fueling our holiness and obedience. "Their knowledge will increase to eternity... the more they see of his excellency, the more will they love him". The more clearly we see the world to come marked by perfect holiness and perfect love, the more eagerly we pursue love and holiness in this one.

A few hints and tips as you read:

- Read with your Bible open. When Edwards makes an observation from the text of Scripture, read the Bible for yourself to see where and why He is saying what he is saying. Edwards is a deep thinker, but he is maximally helpful because he thinks deeply and pastorally about God's Word. Mimic that
- Be aware that Edwards held to a postmillennial eschatology, believing the preaching of the gospel would eventually lead to widespread Christian triumph worldwide, ushering in a prolonged era of righteousness before Christ's return. While our church teaches premillennialism, anticipating Christ's imminent return (Rev 19) prior to His millennial reign (Rev 20), these differences minimally impact this book since its main focus is our eternal state. Still, I wanted you to be aware of Edwards's perspective.
- Read slowly. Edwards uses language and patterns of thinking that are very helpful but may sound odd to your 21st-century ears. Re-reading and maybe even rephrasing for yourself is worthwhile. This is a good, concise book to help you become more comfortable reading authors from centuries past, such as Edwards.

This is a very short book that we were able to secure at a heavy discount. I'm excited to see GBC grow in our love for God, each other, and the lost now in this short life by fixing our gaze on the perfect love we will experience in the endless ages to come. Please read with us. *Jacob Hantla*



Suggested One-Month Reading Plan

Week 1: Monday 7/28 - Sunday 8/3

Forward, 11 pages

Series Preface, 3 pages

Biography of Jonathan Edwards, 2 pages

Week 2: Monday, 8/4 - Sunday, 8/10

Pages 27-49, 22 pages

Week 3: Monday, 8/11 - Sunday, 8/17

Pages 49-76, 27 pages

Week 4: Monday, 8/18 - Sunday, 8/24

Pages 77-93, 16 pages

Week 5: Monday, 8/25 - Sunday, 8/31

Pages 94-115, 21 pages