

## 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)