

“Though you are a great way off from us, yet you are not out of our minds: I am full of concern for you, often think of you, and often pray for you. Though you are at so great a distance from us, and from all your relations, yet this is a comfort to us, that the same God that is here, is also at Onohquaga; and that though you are out of our sight and out of our reach, you are always in God’s hands, who is infinitely gracious; and we can go to him, and commit you to his care and mercy. . . . We hope that God will preserve your life and health, and return you to Stockbridge again in safety; but always remember that life is uncertain: you know not how soon you must die, and therefore had need to be always ready.”

Jonathan Edwards, Letters and Personal Writings

They are some of the most breathtaking words we will ever read: “Though you are out of our sight and out of our reach, you are always in God’s hands.” So wrote Jonathan Edwards to his daughter Esther in 1753. Just a few years later, Edwards would utter similar words when he left for Princeton. Pained by his departure, going only because he thought the will of God summoned him to the school, he left his home, and then turned and said, “I commit you to God.”⁶⁶

The conviction that shines through both statements is this: His family, the family he worked so hard to lead, provide for, and protect, was not his own. Ultimately, Edwards could do nothing to keep Esther from harm, just as he could not ensure that his loved ones would remain safe as he took up residence in Princeton. He did all he could while he lived, but the truth of the matter is that at the time of his letter to Esther, she had less than five years to live, and so did he. He could not carry her into eternity; he could not ferry his wife and children across the river Jordan. Only God could.

So it is for every child of God. There is no earthly person or institution that can ensure our safety. But though this sounds foreboding, we are in truth right where we want to be. Like Esther, we who are in Christ are “always in God’s hands.” No one can snatch us from the Father’s hand. Nothing can happen to us that will derail the will of God for our lives. Life is uncertain, and we do not know how long we have on this earth. But even though we could not possess any less certainty about our earthly future; we cannot not possess any *more* certainty about our heavenly home. We will go there, sooner or later. We will cross the river Jordan, as Jonathan and Esther Edwards did before us, as a host of other saints have done before us. We stand now on the stormy banks of the river, but we see the other side. We are not drifting. We are not in danger.

We are always in God’s hands.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.

John 10:27-29

[Learn More About Always in God’s Hands!](#)