
Imagery, Figurative Language And Repetition In The Sermon Sinners In The Hands Of An Angry God

Several centuries ago, an important revival swept through New England called the Great Awakening. During this time period, Jonathan Edwards, a Puritan priest was greatly impacted from this religion so he wrote and presented a sermon known as "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God". He wrote this Sermon, aiming to frighten his followers by reminding them that there is more than being just a church member to escape from the unforgiving fiery pits of hell. Edwards utilized several rhetorical effects and appeals to drive fear into the hearts of those listening to his speech such as imagery, figurative language and repetition.

Edwards's imagery helped paint terrifying pictures in the minds of his followers of the consequences they will face in the future if they didn't show remorse of their sinful ways and turn to God for forgiveness. Jonathan Edwards said, "The wrath of God burns against them, their damnation does not slumber; the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; he furnaces is now hot" (Paragraph 3, Edwards 153). This statement was used to describe hell, where Edwards followers would be taken to if they didn't show remorse for their sinful acts immediately. When he says "a pit is prepared, the fire is ready", it helped those listening to the speech to imagine themselves falling through the pit, experiencing a dark, burning, never-ending torture. Edwards also uses several other examples of imagery. He states, "The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked." (paragraph 8, Edwards 154). This line told the audience that, they were just like spiders, which are small, insignificant, and gross creatures. Edwards wanted his followers to know that God thought of them as unimportant creatures, just like a spider.

Edwards used repetition for certain parts of the speech that he wanted to make sure his followers would remember. Several times throughout the speech, he says the words "God's wrath" (paragraph 2, Pg 153) and "God's wrath" (paragraph 6, Pg 154). He wanted to make sure that his audience understood the fact that God had ways to torture them that they had never thought of before. Edwards was warning the people that "God's wrath" would be coming for them in no time, unless they showed remorse immediately. There were also several other times when Edwards used repetition during his speech. One word that he rephrased several times was "fire" Fire is so powerful and tempting, yet so threatening and dangerous. Edwards wanted to warn his followers that God had his fire on his side and the next person who embodies sinful act would have to face it.

Jonathan Edwards also used figurative language to warn his followers that they must apologize to god First, Edwards used similes to get his point across. He stated, "His wrath toward you burns like fire;" (Paragraph 7, Edwards 154). He uses this descriptive and persuasive language to frighten and motivate his audience by making them recognize the repulsive state they created for themselves. Edwards also used personification in the speech, He announced to the people, "it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood." (paragraph 6, pg 154). Arrows don't have the capability like humans to become drunk, but Edwards used the phrase to describe the fact that everyone in the audience would be killed, if

they didn't change their way of living immediately. This use of figurative language alone would frighten the people listening to the speech because of the thought of one small, "being made drunk with" gallons of blood, coming from all of the people in the room who were being immoral and sinful.

edubirdie.com