“In the Fall, human persons lost their “nobler and more extensive principles, and fell wholly under the government of self-love.” Persons became “little and ignoble,” and their soul “shrunk from its primitive greatness and extensiveness into an exceeding diminution and confinedness.”

How Love Enlarges the Self: Jonathan Edwards on Loving God and Neighbor by Kyle Strobel. <https://cct.biola.edu/how-love-enlarges-self-jonathan-edwards-loving-god-and-neighbor/>

“those nobler principles were immediately lost and all this excellent enlargedness of his soul was gone and he thenceforward shrunk into a little point, circumscribed and closely shut up within itself to the exclusion of others. God was forsaken and fellow creatures forsaken, and man retired within himself and became wholly governed by narrow, selfish principles. Self-love became absolute master of his soul, the more noble and spiritual principles having taken warning and fled.”

Works of Jonathan Edwards 8:253-254

“Before the first sin, the love of God broadened the self-love in the human heart to take in all of existence and most of all God himself. The fall of man, rather than introducing a new principle of evil into the human world, simply removed supreme love to God, resulting in self-love freed from divine restraint. Sin was the natural result. Edwards explains:

‘Mere self-love, if it be the sole governing principle in the heart and without restraint, will dispose one to delight in another’s misery, because self-love seeks its own comparative happiness. . . . Self-love will delight in cruelty and putting others to pain, because it appears to it as an exercise of power. . . . If there be only self-love that bears rule, it will be contented with nothing short of the throne of God.’ What was once a wholesome natural principle has mutated into a kind of cancer.”

The Four Faces of Self Love in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards, Bruce W. Davidson, Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 51/1 (March 2008) 87–100.