



Northland Reformed

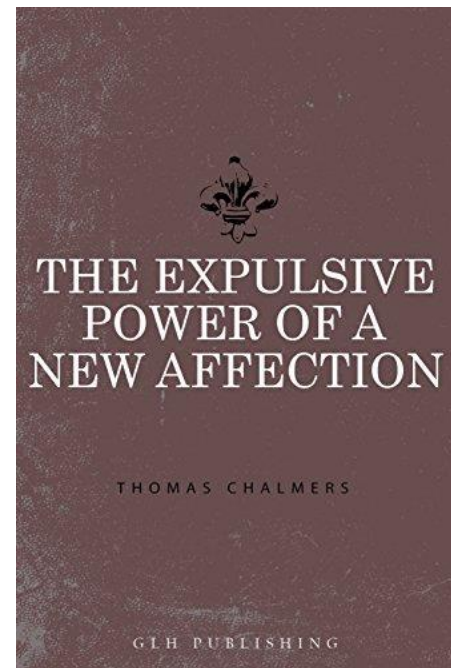
Monthly

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The Expulsive Power of a New Affection

Thomas Chalmers was born in Anstruther, Scotland, on the Fife coast, March 17, 1780. At age 12 he began study at the University of St. Andrews (he was the second youngest student). In 1802 he took his first call to the pastorate but at that time was still unconverted. He had more interest in his academic pursuits than his pastoral duties, even writing in 1805 that, “a minister should be able to complete all his duties in two days and spend the rest of his ‘uninterrupted leisure’ in whatever manner he wished.”

However, all that was to change when, after failing to establish his name in academic circles, he contracted tuberculosis, leading him to a spiritual crisis which resulted in his conversion. From that time forward, he became a powerful preacher of the gospel of Christ. One of his most, if not the most, famous sermons is entitled “The Expulsive Power of a New Affection”¹ which he preached in St. Johns Church, Glasgow, Scotland. The sermon text was 1 John 2:15:



“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

¹ If you wish to read this sermon, it may be found in its entirety at the following link: [Expulsive Power PDF](#)

In this sermon, Chalmers sought to demonstrate that the human heart is always setting its love, or affection, upon something. This is how man has been created, initially to set his heart upon God, to “glorify him and enjoy him forever” (Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 1). Chalmers reminded his hearers that, “Such is the grasping tendency of the human heart, that it must have a something to lay hold of—and which, if wrested away without the substitution of another something in its place, would leave a void and a vacancy as painful to the mind, as hunger is to the natural system.”² Nature abhors a vacuum, and so does the human heart. “The heart must have something to cling to.” But sinful nature, having been corrupted, sets its affection upon the things of this sinful world. In order to remove this affection from the things of this world, it is not enough to show how little value the objects in this world possess, for this will only result in the replacement of one worldly affection with another. Thus, man’s affection must be redirected to something that far exceeds the value of anything in this world, and “the only way to dispossess it of an old affection, is by the expulsive power of a new one.” For Chalmers, this powerful new affection, which must expel the old, was found only through love for God in Christ, for he is the only one who is able to effect such a change in sinners. “The love of the world cannot be expunged by a mere demonstration of the world’s worthlessness” but only by being supplanted by the worthiness of God.

This is where every form of secular self-help or addiction recovery program ultimately fails. They simply replace a less socially acceptable addiction with a more socially acceptable addiction. Addiction to drugs or alcohol becomes addiction to lawful pleasure (food or hobbies). Addiction to gambling is replaced with addiction to work. Addiction to promiscuous sex becomes addiction to a particular relationship. Although each of these substitutes will enable a person to live as a law-abiding citizen, viewed well in the eyes of his neighbor, none will truly satisfy, and all will be lost at death. The only affection that both fully satisfies and finally survives the transition from death to eternity is an affection that is set upon God, for he alone can satisfy the longing of the human heart.

In other words, when one truly understands the beauty of God in Christ, and sets his affection upon him, all other things, including the things of this world that so easily ensnare the affections, will be powerfully pushed out of the heart. This may be illustrated by the concept of a magnet. When a magnet is pulling an object toward itself, a greater force, or greater magnet, is required to pull the object and detach it

² All quotes from Chalmers, Thomas. *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*. Waxkeep Publishing. Kindle Edition.

from the current attraction. Christ is the most powerful magnet for the human heart, and when the affections are properly set upon him one will be pulled from all lesser affections.

It is important to recognize, however, that this change cannot be accomplished except by the power of the Holy Spirit. To quote Chalmers, “To bid a man into whom there has not yet entered the great and ascendant influence of the principle of regeneration, to bid him withdraw his love from all the things that are in the world, is to bid him give up all the affections that are in his heart. The world is the all of a natural man.” Since the world is the all of the natural man, his affection must be drawn away from the world. He must be changed at the heart level and the primary way that the Holy Spirit works on the heart is through the preaching of his Word. As God’s people come to worship, they come from a week living in a world that seeks to turn their hearts from God. When they encounter God’s Word, the beauty of Christ is displayed powerfully, and the heart is redirected to the only one who can truly push out all the various worldly attractions competing for affection. However, the opposite is true as well. Failure to separate from the world on the Lord’s Day in order to set one’s affection on Christ will unavoidably result in the affections becoming more and more set upon the world.

As Christians, we are called to “love not the world, neither the things that are in the world” (1 John 2:15). Where do the affections of your heart reside? What do you value most? Remember, the world, the flesh, and the Devil will never stop seeking to draw your heart away from Christ. You must constantly come to the well and drink deeply of his Word, for that is the only remedy for misplaced affections. Thomas Chalmers understood this truth, and therefore he rightly said, “We know of no other way by which to keep the love of the world out of our heart than to keep in our hearts the love of God—and no other way by which to keep our hearts in the love of God than building ourselves up on our most holy faith.”

By Rev. Christopher Campbell

Congregational News

New Catechism Curriculum



The Catechism students were excited to artistically decorate bags to store their new books as we begin a new Catechism Curriculum this year. The **primary book** we are using is the *Confirmation Handbook*. The **secondary book** is *The Church in History* and it will be used in conjunction with the first book to assist the students in understanding how God has worked throughout history in building His church.

Cody Cook Homecoming Celebration

In February we celebrated the return of Cody Cook from his deployment. Cody is a Sergeant (E-5) in Missouri National Guard and was deployed as a Motor Transport Operator in Kuwait and Iraq. His wife, Cara, expressed her gratitude with these words, “A BIG



HUGE thank you to everyone at Northland Reformed Church for the duration of this deployment. We have



received an out pouring of love and support from everybody! The many packages sent to Cody and the many acts of kindness to myself and the kids while he was gone! I don't think we could have done this deployment without our church. We thank God for blessing us with the truth of God's word and the love of the people! Thank you thank you!!!”

Liam Ronan Leary Has Arrived!

Sunday evening, February 18th, at 7:44 PM, Cassie Leary was admitted to Saint Luke's North Hospital. At 9:04 PM, Brian Leary called Pastor Campbell and informed him that the baby was on the umbilical cord, his heart rate had stopped, and that they were rushing Cassie into surgery for a C-section. Gathering together at the hospital with Cassie's parents and siblings, we prayed for Cassie and the baby, and waited for news from the doctors. Praise God for his mercy, for Cassie's surgery occurred without incident and Liam Ronan Leary was born healthy. He weighed 7 lbs. 4 oz. and measured 20 ½ inches. Thanks to everyone who prayed for him, all praise goes to our God for his safe delivery!



March Schedule

REGULAR MEETINGS

- Sunday Worship | Mar 4, 11, 18, 25 | 9:30AM & 5:00PM | We will continue our sermon series on the book of Galatians in the morning, and the book of Hosea in the evening. Rev. Mark Vander Hart will be preaching morning and evening services on March 18.
- Sunday School | Mar 4, 11, 18, 25 | 11:15AM
- Men's Study Group | Mar 10, 24 | 7:00AM | The Men's Study Group, led by Gary Duffey, will continue to study the book *Devoted to God* by Sinclair Ferguson.
- Catechism Class | Mar 7, 14, 21, 28 | 4:30PM
- Friday Night Fellowship Group | Feb 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 | Join us for a meal and lesson as we continue to work through John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Joint Kansas City Area Reformed Churches (KCARC) Service | Mar 4 | 6PM @ Redeemer PCA, 9333 W 159th Street, Overland Park, KS 66221
- Lord's Supper | Mar 11 | 9:30AM | We will be observing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper during the morning worship service.
- Fellowship Meal | Mar 11 | After the morning service we will join with one another and share a meal. All are welcome and encouraged to bring a dish to share!
- Prayer Meeting | Mar 21 | 6:15PM | Join us as we share a meal and a time of prayer.
- Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) | Feb 6, 13, 20, 27 | 6:30PM | Bible Study Fellowship meets at the church, with groups for both men and women. The current study is on the book of Romans.



Scripture Memorization

March 4	Hebrews 12:1
March 11	Hebrews 12:2
March 18	Psalms 96:1-3
March 25	Psalms 96:4-5