

Pastor & Parish Redux

Thomas Chalmers' Conversion & Kilmany Ministry, 1811-1815

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On September 3, 1805, Thomas Chalmers, a minister in the Church of Scotland, confided to his brother that the “clergyman's life” was a “dull and unvaried course [offering] little new or interesting.”¹ In the same year he vented that a clergyman is “one of those ill-fated beings whom the malignant touch of ordination has condemned to a life of ignorance and obscurity; a being who must bid adieu, it seems, to every flattering anticipation, and drivel out the remainder of his days in insignificance.”² Such words may seem strange indeed, coming from an ordained minister in the Kirk of John Knox, the very cradle of Presbyterianism. But all this was about to change, as Chalmers soon experienced a radical, evangelical conversion. He eventually became not only a highly acclaimed, spellbinding preacher, but a visionary and energetic churchman as well, taking the helm of the Church of Scotland and, through the Disruption of 1843, that of the Free Church of Scotland.

Throughout his career, Chalmers vigorously advocated a return to the old parish model for the spiritual, moral, and socioeconomic regeneration of the land. Being a man of science, he was not content with theorizing. At three points, he conducted his own 'experiments' to test and validate his hypothesis; and having hailed them as successes, he commended the model for the imitation of others. Contemporary scholarship has considered Chalmers' parochialism from several angles.³

1 Thomas Chalmers to James Chalmers, 3 September 1805, Thomas Chalmers Papers, New College Library, Edinburgh [hereafter NCL CHA], 3.3.18.

2 Thomas Chalmers, *Observations on a Passage in Mr. Playfair's Letter to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, relative to the Mathematical Pretensions of the Scottish Clergy* (Cupar-Fife, 1805), 48.

3 Stewart J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), xiii-xviii, 350-51; Stewart J. Brown, “Thomas Chalmers and the Communal Ideal in Victorian Scotland,” in *Victorian Values: A Joint Symposium of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the British Academy, December 1990*, ed. T. C. Smout (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1992): 61-80; David William Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin and Hyman, 1989), 10-12; Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism*

Unarguably, though, his overriding passion was evangelism. He has often been quoted, if sometimes begrudgingly, “I should count the salvation of a single soul more important than the rescue of a whole empire from pauperism.”⁴ And so for Chalmers, though the parish served various purposes, such as shoring up and advancing the “godly commonwealth” or alleviating grinding poverty through hands-on, constructive benevolence, it above all served the cause of missions. In his second charge in Glasgow, Chalmers witnessed firsthand the spreading blight of irreligion among the poor, neglected “masses,” living and dying unchurched within the very confines of Christendom. These poor souls were so close yet so very far. Only an explicitly missionary effort could overcome the “moral distance” of home heathenism. Hence, the parish plan:

I ought not to speak of it as an innovation; for it is the precious system of the olden time, though it has been grievously departed from. Let me call it now a great Home Mission; for it is, to all intents and purposes, a missionary enterprise. There are a number of people who will not encourage the work, unless it is work across the ocean, or over vast continents. But let me remind you, that though the distance of the heathen be in this case but half a mile from your own doors, yet, morally speaking, it is as great as if they lived in the wilds of Tartary, or in the South Sea Islands.⁵

on *Social and Economic Thought, 1785-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 55-63, 88-9; R. O. Cage and E. O. A. Checkland, “Thomas Chalmers and Urban Poverty: The St. John’s Parish Experiment in Glasgow, 1819-1837,” *The Philosophical Journal* 13, no. 1 (1976): 37-56; Brian Dickey, “‘Going About and Doing Good’: Evangelicals and Poverty c. 1815-1870,” in *Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal: Evangelicals and Society in Britain, 1780-1980*, ed. John Wolffe (London: SPCK, 1995), 45-6; John F. McCaffrey, “Thomas Chalmers and Social Change,” *Scottish Historical Review* 60, no. 169 (1981): 32-60; Mary T. Furgol, “Thomas Chalmers’ Poor Relief Theories and Their Implementation in the Early Nineteenth Century” (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1987); Atsuko Betchaku, “Thomas Chalmers, David Stow and the St. John’s Experiment: A Study in Educational Influence in Scotland and Beyond, 1819 – c. 1850,” *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 27, no. 2 (2007): 170-90; Alec C. Cheyne, “Thomas Chalmers: Then and Now,” in *Studies in Scottish Church History* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999): 79-106; Lauren M. E. Goodlad, “‘Making the Working Man Like Me’: Charity, Pastorship, and Middle-Class Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain. Thomas Chalmers and Dr. James Phillips Kay,” *Victorian Studies* 43, no. 4 (2001): 591-617; David Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), 1; Alison Twells, *The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The ‘Heathen’ at Home and Overseas* (Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 53, 78, 153; Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation, 1800-2000*, 2nd ed. (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 18-30, 43-48.

⁴ Brown, *Thomas Chalmers*, 138; Cheyne, “Then and Now,” 88; Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, 88; Harald Beutel, *Die Sozialtheologie Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847) und ihre Bedeutung für die Freikirchen: eine Studie zur Diakonie der Erweckungsbewegung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 106. “Pauperism” was a term commonly used at the time to refer to the degraded condition of the poor as recipients of statutory relief.

⁵ Thomas Chalmers, “Dr Chalmers’ Lecture,” *The Witness*, 19 June 1844.

Admittedly, scholarship has recognized this spiritual dimension of Chalmers' parish model⁶ and even its priority over things temporal.⁷ Yet it has not been explored in any depth. And the subject should be of all the more interest, given the fact that no other figure in Christian history had argued at such length for the ecclesiastical parish, nor so uniquely, construing it as a mission agency within a fracturing and secularizing Christendom.⁸

In this article, I explore these issues by looking at where it all began. First I retell the story of Chalmers' conversion and subsequent evangelical pastorate, tracing his rediscovery of the old parish model of pastoral care. Afterwards, I will tease out the ways in which Chalmers' experience in Kilmany shaped his later advocacy of a distinctly parochial pastoral ministry in a rapidly changing age — a parish ministry both within and beyond church establishments.

1. *Chalmers' Conversion and Pastoral Renewal*

Chalmers' derogatory sentiments above about the ministry were not at all unheard of; they breathed what many deemed the chilling spirit of Moderatism, the dominant religious mindset of 18th century Scotland. In the name of reason and humanism, Moderates generally downplayed and at least implicitly negated the old evangelical doctrines of the fallenness of man, predestination, the substitutionary work of Christ, and the new birth.⁹ Deriding evangelical spirituality as fanaticism,

6 H. D. Rack, "Domestic Visitation: A Chapter in Early Nineteenth Century Evangelism," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 24, no. 4 (1973): 357-76; John Roxborough, *Thomas Chalmers, Enthusiast for Mission: The Christian Good of Scotland and the Rise of the Missionary Movement*, Rutherford Studies in Historical Theology (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Publishing, 1999); Ian J. Shaw, "Thomas Chalmers, David Nasmith, and the Origins of the City Mission Movement," *Evangelical Quarterly* 76, no. 1 (2004): 31-46. Further, several of those cited in footnotes 31-34 also refer to it.

7 Mary T. Furgol, "Chalmers and Poor Relief: An Incidental Sideline?" in *The Practical and the Pious: Essays on Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847)*, ed. Alec C. Cheyne (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1985): 115-29.

8 Michael Ives, "Desert Rose: Thomas Chalmers' West Port Experiment (1844-1847)," *The Confessional Presbyterian* 14 (2018), 115-25.

9 Moderate clergymen infrequently made overt attacks against the classic evangelical theology enshrined in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the Kirk's formally owned statement of faith and doctrinal terms for ordination. Yet scholarly consensus agrees that they had "very largely ... accepted the rationalistic theology current in England." Their

they tended to preach morality and civility, deed over creed, and espoused a much more synergistic view of salvation.¹⁰ Contrasted with the more evangelically-minded “orthodox” or the “Popular” party of the 18th century, such as Witherspoon and Willison,¹¹ by the time of Chalmers' entrance into the ministry, the pro-Enlightenment Moderates held sway in the state Church.

During this time, it was not uncommon for a Moderate-minded young man to seek the holy ministry for reasons other than the 'cure of souls.' Because of its endowment, a parish charge could become a sinecure, furnishing its incumbent with ample leisure time to devote to whatever literary or scientific pursuit he might have.¹² As a man of his time, then, Chalmers followed suit. His real passion was not ministry but mathematics. So when he received the presentation to the rural Fifeshire parish of Kilmany, he enthusiastically accepted it on two counts — it secured him a generous stipend, and it happened to be close to St. Andrews, the home of the oldest of Scotland's prestigious universities. On May 12, 1803, then, the Presbytery of Cupar ordained and inducted him into his charge. To be sure, the new pastor prepared his homilies and made occasional rounds. But he threw himself into his favorite avocation by conducting a course in mathematics in the university community, with the ambition of securing a professorship.¹³

But this move was not without criticism. His own presbytery accused him of compromising his spiritual charge in the interest of secular pursuits and ordered him either to desist from the classes or receive ecclesiastical censure. Because of his non-clerical ambitions, he had grossly neglected household visitations, catechizing the youth, and other pastoral responsibilities. While technically Chalmers was not yet a 'pluralist' — a minister holding both the offices of pastor and professor while collecting livings from both — he was certainly a functional one. And though he returned to Kilmany

doctrinal latitudinarianism if not heterodoxy was more or less an open secret. See Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Scottish Church, 1688-1843: The Age of the Moderates* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1981), 106.

10 Thomas Ahnert, *The Moral Culture of the Scottish Enlightenment, 1690-1805* (New Haven: Yale, 2015), 78-79.

11 Ibid., 94-108; John R. McIntosh, “The Popular Party in the Church of Scotland, 1740-1800,” (PhD diss., University of Glasgow, 1989), 35-58.

12 Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 71.

13 Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 21-22.

on Sundays, he was often away; during his maiden year he was very arguably a 'non-resident' pastor, residing in St. Andrews Monday through Saturday. And the sermons, not surprisingly, were hastily prepared.¹⁴ But Chalmers would have none of it. Indignant, he could testify from experience that “after the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week of uninterrupted leisure, for the prosecution of any science in which his taste may dispose him to engage.”¹⁵

Thus, one searches in vain in his Moderate phase to find even the smallest embryo of his future interest in parish ministry. At that point, it was but a stepping-stone to academic advancement. He felt no burden for his parish, much less had it captured his imagination as a catalyst for the rebirth his beloved Scotland. And the reason was close at hand, since in his later judgment he had not been reborn. Now, Chalmers certainly was cognizant of the legacy and responsibility of the Kirk's parish ministry — painfully so. Not only did he experience pushback from his ecclesiastical peers, but his own father was a constant reminder. John Chalmers, a pious son of the Kirk, was concerned if not unnerved about his son's situation and the ramifications it would have on the spiritual well-being of his parish. Knowing his father's “scruples about clerical residence,”¹⁶ Chalmers reassured: “Even at present I am able to devote as much time and as much attention to other subjects, as I will be under the necessity of doing next winter, and after all I discharge my duties, I hope, in a satisfactory manner. With regard to non-residence, that is only to last for six months.”¹⁷ But on another occasion, he bristled with self-justification:

I beg you will not distress yourself by any suspicions as to my indifference to the parochial duties. From the infinite variety of men's dispositions, there must be different methods of expressing the feelings of their hearts; and they will employ different instruments for improving the purity of their purposes. I feel that the solitude of

14 Ibid., 21. Chalmers at least had covered his bases, as Brown further notes: “Two neighboring clergymen . . . had promised to attend to his clerical responsibilities during the week.”

15 Chalmers, *Observations*, 11.

16 Thomas Chalmers to James Chalmers, 16 November 1804, NCL CHA 3.3.15.

17 Thomas Chalmers to John Chalmers, 10 October 1803, NCL, CHA 3.3.2; cf. Thomas Chalmers to John Chalmers, 19 February 1802, NCL CHA 3.2.32.

a few days would be to me a painful and unmeaning solemnity. Accuse me of indifference when you have observed me deficient in any of the essential duties — when you have observed me shrinking from any of those labours which the cares of a parish impose.¹⁸

Far from showing signs of budging by the appeals of his devout father, Chalmers stubbornly doubled down.

Then came the change. During a season of debilitating illness from mid-1809 into 1810, Chalmers sensed that he was nearing the boundaries of eternity. In February 1810, he confided to a fellow minister from his sickbed,

My confinement has fixed on my heart a very strong impression of the insignificance of time — an impression which I trust will not abandon me though I again reach the heyday of health and vigour. This should be the first step to another impression still more salutary — the magnitude of eternity. Strip human life of its connexion with a higher scene of existence, and it is the illusion of an instant, an unmeaning farce, a series of visions and projects, and convulsive efforts, which terminate in nothing.¹⁹

Evangelical authors but recently spurned were revisited and read with increasing interest. Chief among these was William Wilberforce, whose *Practical View*²⁰ winsomely compelled Chalmers to reconsider the evangelical message and its “peculiar doctrines” he had before nauseated.²¹ William Hanna, Chalmers' son-in-law, suggests a gradual psychological journey which at length brought him to an unreserved “conclusion and repose”²² in the Gospel:

In the course of that memorable transition-period which elapsed from the beginning of November, 1809, till the

18 Thomas Chalmers to John Chalmers, 28 April 1803, NCL CHA 3.2.68.

19 Hanna, *Memoirs*, 1:152.

20 William Wilberforce, *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians, in the Higher and Middle Classes in This Country, Contrasted with Real Christianity* (London: Printed for T. Cadell, Jun. and W. Davies, 1798).

21 Hanna, *Memoirs*, 1:108, cf. 1:195, 246; Thomas Chalmers to Andrew Thomson, 18 January 1811, NCL CHA 3.6.12; Journal, 11 and 30 January 1811, NCL CHA 6.1.4.

22 Thomas Chalmers to John Honey, 2 May 1812, in *A Selection from the Correspondence of the Late Thomas Chalmers, D.D. LL.D.*, ed. William Hanna (Edinburgh: T. Constable, 1853), 248-49.

close of December 1810, important modifications in his doctrinal views were undoubtedly effected. His partial discovery of the pervading and defiling element of ungodliness, gave him other notions of human depravity than those he had previously entertained, and prepared him not only to acquiesce in, but to appropriate to himself representations from which a year before he would have turned away with disgust. And with his altered view of human sinfulness, there came also an altered view of the atonement. He was prepared now to go further than he had gone before in recognizing the death of Christ as a true and proper sacrifice for sin. Still, however, while looking to that death for the removal of past guilt, he believed that it lay wholly with himself after he had been forgiven to approve himself to God, to win the divine favor, to work out the title to the heavenly inheritance. The full and precise effect of Christ's obedience unto death was not as yet discerned. Over that central doctrine of Christianity which tells of the sinner's free justification before God through the merits of His Son, there hung air obscuring mist; there was a flaw in the motive which prompted the struggle in which Mr. Chalmers so devotedly engaged; there was a misconception of the object which it was possible by such a struggle to realize. More than a year of fruitless toil had to be described, ere the true ground of a sinner's acceptance with God was reached, and the true principle of all acceptable obedience was implanted in his heart.²³

Other social, political, and personal factors were doubtless at play. But as a distinctly religious conversion, it was, as Chalmers' modern biographer put it, "inexplicable. Something undoubtedly happened to him between 1809 and 1811, which fundamentally changed the way he conceived of God and the world, so that he committed himself to the Evangelical movement which once he had despised."²⁴

After recovering from the illness, he returned to the pulpit a changed man. His people immediately sensed that there had been a revolution in the mind of their pastor, as he preached with a newfound unction and immediacy.

"He would bend over the pulpit," said one of his old hearers, "and press us to take the gift, as if he held it that moment in his hand, and would not be satisfied till every one of us had got possession of it. And often when the

²³ Hanna, *Memoirs*, 1:114-5.

²⁴ Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 50.

sermon was over, and the psalm was sung, and he rose to pronounce the blessing, he would break out afresh with some new entreaty, unwilling to let us go until he had made one more effort to persuade us to accept of it.”²⁵

Word spread to nearby villages of the “new miracle of Divine grace,”²⁶ and services swelled with interested worshipers. Before long, the new convert was soon converting others. On one Sabbath²⁷ in 1812 after Chalmers had preached on John 3:16, two sons of the parish, Alexander Paterson and Robert Edie, met as the congregation dispersed. Upon finding themselves alone, Alexander asked Robert whether he had “felt anything particularly” that morning, confiding “I never felt myself to be a lost sinner till to-day, when I was listening to that sermon.” Robert rejoined, “It is very strange ... it was just the same with me.”²⁸

Strangely enough, Chalmers' aspect and pulpit manner were unimpressive, further encumbered by his habit of his word-for-word reading of full manuscripts. The palpable electricity, then, could mystify and defy explanation. Brown suggests that Chalmers' new, deeply held doctrinal convictions, his appeal to the imaginative and emotive romantic spirit of the age, and at the same time his synthesis of that new romanticism with an older Scottish enlightenment style, forcefully combined to impact his audiences.²⁹ Chalmers, however, directly ascribed this to a hidden spring in 'the secret place of the Most High.' He had by the regenerating power of the Spirit's work rediscovered the Bible as God's written Word, counting it as heavenly manna for his newfound spiritual appetite. Hanna records the following illustrative anecdote:

His regular and earnest study of the Bible was one of the first and most noticeable effects of Mr. Chalmers'

25 Hanna, *Memoirs*, 1:420-21.

26 W. M. Hetherington, *Memoir and Correspondence of Mrs. Coutts* (Edinburgh: J. Maclaren & J. Menzies, 1867), 121.

27 A designation for Sunday then in general use within Scottish society, reflecting the Church of Scotland's Puritanic position on the Fourth Commandment. See N. R. Needham, “Sabbatarianism,” in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, ed. Nigel M. de S. Cameron (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 737-38.

28 Hanna, *Memoirs*, 1:428-29.

29 Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 58-59.

conversion. His nearest neighbour and most frequent visitor was old John Bonthron, who, having once seen better days, was admitted to an easy and privileged familiarity, in the exercise of which one day before the memorable illness, he said to Mr. Chalmers—"I find you aye busy, sir, with one thing or another, but come when I may, I never find you at your studies for the Sabbath." "Oh an hour or two on the Saturday evening is quite enough for that," was the minister's answer. But now the change had come, and John, on entering the manse, often found Mr. Chalmers poring eagerly over the pages of the Bible. The difference was too striking to escape notice, and with the freedom given him, which he was ready enough to use, he said, "I never come in now, sir, but I find you aye at your Bible." "All too little, John, all too little," was the significant reply.³⁰

The new pastor no longer read his Bible simply as a professional obligation, gleaning bits and pieces to adorn his moralizing homilies. For him it was an intensely personal and transformative exercise. In particular, he was borne by the mighty current running through its pages: the Gospel remedy—Christ crucified—fully and freely offered to helpless sinners and received by faith alone. Before, he preached morality, a dry well set before the thirsty. Now, having himself found the Living Water, he summoned others and, surprisingly, found moral transformation as its byproduct.³¹

Further, just as Kilmany's pulpit changed, so also did Kilmany's parish. In the final three years of Chalmers' pastoral labors in Kilmany, he left off numbers in the abstract to devote his attention to more concrete ones—his parishioners. They were the same people as before, living in the same geographically-defined charge assigned him by his presbytery. But they were now his flock, head-for-head, rich and poor, saints and sinners. Each of them had immortal souls, destined for eternity. So what before could be done in less than a weekend now took on more than full-time proportions. In 1811, he wrote in his journal:

Now that I have got well, let me devote a great part of my time to the business of my parish; and may it be the main anxiety of my life, Lord, to promote Thy glory, and to testify the gratitude of my heart for the merciful

³⁰ Hanna, *Memoirs*, 1:262.

³¹ Thomas Chalmers, *The Duty of Giving an Immediate Diligence to the Business of the Christian Life: Being an Address to the Inhabitants of the Parish of Kilmany* (Edinburgh: William White, 1815), 40-47.

scheme of reconciliation made known and offered to us in the gospel. May I every day feel a growing interest in the covenant of grace; and let me evince in my own conduct that the doctrine of faith is a doctrine according to godliness.³²

This new resolve yielded a thorough-going regimen of preaching and pastoring, embodying the old ideal of the Presbyterian man of God. Not only did he prepare for and enter the 'sacred desk' with fresh unction on the Sabbaths, but he energetically labored between them within his "home-walk."³³ Every house was his, and he visited every family dutifully each year if not more. In this experience, he was gradually rediscovering his ancestral inheritance—the Scottish parish ministry.

In 1813 and 1814, Chalmers made ample personal records of his visits throughout the parish. Together with his private journal entries, his memoranda entitled "Records of spiritual intercourse with my people" give a glimpse of his intensifying enthusiasm for pastoral ministry. In his rounds, he would visit with the families in their own homes, read Scripture, give lively exhortation from the text to the hearts of the family, and pray with and for them. But further, he took care to engage in practical diagnostics, looking for disciplines of spiritual health the Kirk had standardized during the Reformation and post-Reformation periods³⁴ and modeled by eminent ministers well into the 18th century.³⁵ Chief among these was whether the family members were all in regular attendance on the public means of grace. It is to be kept in mind that not all parishioners were communicants, that is, individuals eligible for communion by a public profession of faith. The index of this profession was a

32 Journal, 13 March 1811, NCL CHA 6.1.4; cf. Journal, 16 March 1811, 4 July 1811, 8 September 1811, NCL CHA 6.1.4.

33 Thomas Chalmers, *The Collected Works of Thomas Chalmers* (Glasgow: W. Collins, 1836-42), 14:50, 139, 18:71.

34 Church of Scotland, "Sess. 13 et ult., April 27, 1708 – Act and Recommendation concerning Ministerial Visitation of Families," in *Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1638-1842. Reprinted from the Original Edition, Under the Superintendence of the Church Law Society* (Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Printing and Publishing Company, 1843), 426-28, cf. 43, 517; Alexander Henderson, *The Government and Order of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh: James Bryson, 1641), 17-18; C. Morthland, *An Account of the Government of the Church of Scotland, As It Is Establish'd by Law; and of the Discipline and Worship Presently Practiced by That Church. To Which Is Added, the Form of Process in the Several Judicatories Thereof, with Relation to Scandals and Censures; Approv'd by an Act of Assembly Met at Edinburgh the Eighteenth of April 1707* (London: printed for John Lawrence, 1708), 12-13; Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 73-83.

35 Stephen A. Woodruff, "The Pastoral Ministry in the Church of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century, with Special Reference to Thomas Boston, John Willison and John Erskine" (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1965).

working knowledge of basic Christian doctrine and a life free from gross or 'scandalous' sins.³⁶ Yet all parishioners, eligible or not, were at least obliged to sit under the preaching. For, as the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* put it, "The reading, but especially the preaching of the Word, is an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation."³⁷ So the prime diagnostic was whether such an individual or household was in regular attendance on the Sabbath services. Naturally, then, we read such notes in Chalmers' personal records as, "Mr D [*sic*] absenting himself from all ordinances."³⁸

Then there was the second main diagnostic, family worship. This was a simple, yet time-honored Scottish evangelical practice in which heads of households would call all members of the family together for a kind of short, domestic worship service. The Bible would be read, a metrical psalm sung, children and servants would be drilled in their ability to recite and comprehend the *Shorter Catechism*, and the father would lead all to the throne of grace. The national Kirk had long obliged pastors and their elders to ensure that their parishioners, communicant or otherwise, were dutifully conducting daily family worship.³⁹ Consequently, we see Chalmers urging this practice throughout his efforts. "Had a day at Mr Edies. . . . I thought the Edies little impressed with my exhortation about family religion, and the care of watching over the souls of children."⁴⁰ "[May] 6. . . . Mr. Keyden arrived in the evening. Have not yet succeeded in prevailing on [him] to have family worship."⁴¹ But the good pastor was undeterred, as four days later he writes, "Sunday [May] 10. . . .

36 Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 79.

37 Westminster Assembly of Divines, "The Shorter Catechism," in *The Westminster Confession of Faith* (1646; repr., Glasgow: Free Presbyterian Publications, 1995), 312.

38 Thomas Chalmers, "Records of my Spiritual Intercourse with my People," 8 February 1814, NCL CHA 6.2.4. Grammar and punctuation largely preserved. Note that Sabbath observance, inclusive of church attendance, had by force of law been obligatory on every Scottish citizen. A range of discipline would be imposed from private exhortation to fines. However, Enlightenment forces in the 18th century brought about such changes that the Church had become more or less a "voluntary society." Church attendance, then, remained a prime pastoral concern, yet without civil 'teeth.' See Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Scottish Church, 1688-1843: The Age of the Moderates* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1981), 98.

39 Church of Scotland, "The Directions of the Generall Assembly for Secret and Private Worship, and mutuall Edification, for cherishing Piety, for maintaining Unitie, and avoiding Schisme and Division," *Acts of the General Assembly*, 154-57; see also *ibid.*, 192, 241.

40 Chalmers, "Spiritual Intercourse," 16 February 1813, NCL CHA 6.2.4.

41 Journal, 6 May 1812, NCL CHA 6.1.5.

Had some earnest and particular conversation with Mr. Keyden in the hearing of Miss King his housekeeper, and prevailed upon him to have family worship in the evening.”⁴² And just for good measure, two days later, we read, “Got family worship performed again at Mr. Keydens [*sic*], and am delighted to hear him say, that he intends to continue the system.”⁴³

Above all, though, his visits were errands in the interests of eternity. Beyond ensuring the routines of spiritual maintenance and growth were in place, the pastor wanted to know how it fared with each one's soul. “March 23. Opened myself more freely to Mr. B. He acquiesces. You carry his assent always along with you, but you feel as if you have no point of resistance and are making no impression.”⁴⁴ Continually transcending trivialities, he would sometimes risk touching a raw nerve in the service of souls. “June 2. Mr Miller . . . sent for me in prospect of death. A man of profligate and profane habits, and who resents my calling him an unworthy sinner.” “[June] 4. Visited again Mr. Miller. Found him worse but displeased at my method of administering to his spiritual wants; said that it was most unfortunate he had sent for me. . . . seemed quite determined to wrap himself in an Antinomian security.”⁴⁵ And sincere communicants, already judged the 'well,' yet stood in need of routine checkups. Such “examinations” were usually coordinated with Communion seasons: “[August] 8. Reexamined a great many communicants—and I pray God for the origin and progress of religion in their souls. O fit me for the great charge of guiding them to the way of peace.”⁴⁶

The following anecdote is recounted by one of the members of his Kilmany parish, Mr. Robert Edie, offering a vignette into how Chalmers went about his family visits and how he earnestly sought to win souls under each roof:

I have a very lively recollection of the intense earnestness of his addresses on occasions of visitation in my

42 Journal, 10 May 1812, NCL CHA 6.1.5.

43 Journal, 12 May 1812, NCL CHA 6.1.5.

44 Chalmers, “Spiritual Intercourse,” 23 March 1813, NCL CHA 6.2.4.

45 Chalmers, “Spiritual Intercourse,” 2, 4 June 1813, NCL CHA 6.2.4.

46 Journal, 8 August 1811, NCL CHA 6.1.4.

father's house, when he would unconsciously move forward on his chair to the very margin of it, in his anxiety to impart to the family and servants the impressions of eternal things that so filled his own soul. "It would take a great book," said he, beginning his address to one of these household congregations, "to contain the names of all the individuals that have ever lived, from the days of Adam down to the present hour; but there is one name that takes in the whole of them—that name is *sinner*: and here is a message from God to every one that bears that name—"The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

Eddie then gives another anecdote demonstrating keen pastoral insight:

Wishing to tell them what kind of faith God would have them to cherish, and what kind of fear, and how it was that instead of hindering each other, the right fear and the right faith worked into each others' hands, he said, "It is just as if you threw out a rope to a drowning man. Faith is the hold he takes of it. It is fear which makes him grasp it with all his might; and the greater his fear, the firmer his hold."⁴⁷

Not content with hoarding his newly discovered riches, Chalmers lavished them on his fellow bankrupts.

Combined with this house-to-house program of visitation, he frequently catechized his parish. The Reformation fathers had devised this practice of dialogic instruction especially with a view to preparing and admitting all who would partake of the Lord's Supper, lest the Table be profaned by the ignorant or otherwise unworthy.⁴⁸ Having divided his parish into several districts, he would assemble the inhabitants in some convenient location such as a barn and ask young and old, male and female, to repeat and explain the catechism's answers. By his queries, he ascertained to what degree they grasped what they had learned by rote. But this catechist was no drill sergeant. Throughout each exercise, he was preeminently pastoral, often showing delicacy so as not to

⁴⁷ Hanna, *Memoirs*, 1:410-11.

⁴⁸ Church of Scotland, *Acts of the General Assembly*, 193, 729; Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 76-83.

embarrass anyone unnecessarily. He might, for example, ask a general question on a certain point. If no soul was brave enough to venture an answer, he would take all the blame to himself for not having asked the question clearly enough to be understood and proceeded to make another go of it.⁴⁹

Last, as adjuncts to his spiritual office, he involved himself in the oversight of the parish schools and local poor relief. Both of these responsibilities had also been handed down to him by law and custom; and while ministers were primarily carers of the soul, their prominent position in the yet religiously integrated society of rural Scotland entailed a measure of their clerical involvement. Brown summarizes the Kirk's outlook, "In its ideal, the parish ministry focused upon fulfilling the needs of the whole 'natural' man—intellectual, moral, and physical—as well as upon providing vehicles of divine grace for the salvation of God's elect saints."⁵⁰ Chalmers clearly embraced this more holistic approach to ministry and endeavored to implement it among the degraded poor of his future city missions.

Given this radical revolution in pastoral ministry, it is hardly surprising that his earlier career in Moderatism became a matter of profound self-reproach. He had omitted the 'one thing needful,' a sin fearfully aggravated by his position as an ordained caretaker of souls. On September 7, 1812, Chalmers wrote in his journal, "I again prayed for the forgiveness of my long continued neglect and indolence as a Christian minister."⁵¹ Two months later we read, "Prayed for the repentance and remission of my sin of negligence in holy things as a minister of the gospel — for my parish and for the more attentive and conscientious discharge of my engagements amongst them."⁵²

His penitence eventually went public. While it is true that Chalmers' conversion in or around 1811 did not produce an immediate, open disavowal of his early career, it was clear to all that "he now preached the faith which he once destroyed."⁵³ Many years later, however, he did go on record. During a debate in the General Assembly of 1825 on the subject of pluralities — against which

49 Hanna, *Memoirs*, 1:412.

50 Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 70-75.

51 Journal, 7 September 1812, NCL CHA 6.1.5.

52 Journal, 11 November 1812, NCL CHA 6.1.5.

53 Hetherington, *Mrs. Coutts*, 123.

Chalmers spoke with eloquence—an unexpected challenge put him on his heels. One of his Moderate opponents spoke and read from a pamphlet of his published back in 1805, when he infamously declared that he could devote a mere two days of the week to his parish duties, freeing him to pursue whatever avocations might please him the other five. At this, Chalmers arose—yet not to defend but to incriminate himself:

Verily I believed that my unfortunate pamphlet had long ere now descended into the tomb of merited oblivion, and that there it was mouldering in silence, forgotten and disregarded. But since that gentleman has brought it forward in the face of this house, I can assure him that I feel grateful to him from the bottom of my heart, for the opportunity he has now afforded me of making a public recantation of the sentiments it contains. . . . I now confess myself to have been guilty of a heinous crime, and I now stand a repentant culprit before the bar of this venerable assembly. . . .

I was at that time, Sir, more devoted to mathematics than to the literature of my profession; and feeling grieved and indignant at what I conceived an undue reflection on the abilities and education of our clergy, I came forward with that pamphlet to rescue them from what I deemed an unmerited reproach, by maintaining that a devoted and exclusive attention to the study of mathematics was not dissonant to the proper habits of a clergyman. Alas! Sir, so I thought in my ignorance and pride. I have now no reserve in saying that the sentiment was wrong, and that, in the utterance of it, I penned what was most outrageously wrong. Strangely blinded that I was! What, Sir, is the object of mathematical science? Magnitude and the proportions of magnitude. But *then*, Sir, I had forgotten *two magnitudes*—I thought not of the littleness of time—I recklessly thought not of the greatness of eternity.⁵⁴

Not surprisingly, his evangelical ministry in this sleepy rural village did not go unnoticed, and all the more as this penitent proselyte was a dynamic preacher.⁵⁵ So it was that in 1815, he was called to and

⁵⁴ Thomas Chalmers, “Speech on Pluralities,” in *Report of the Debate in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the Overtures Anent the Union of Offices, May, 1825* (Edinburgh: John Lindsay & Co.), 191.

⁵⁵ Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 57-58.

accepted one of the most important charges in Scotland, the Tron Kirk in Glasgow. It was there that Chalmers began to launch his program of parish experiments, seeking to reverse the spiritual and moral blight of Scotland's teeming cities.

2. Chalmers' Parish Paradigm & Vision

Clearly, Thomas Chalmers' evangelical ministry in Kilmany embodied the ideals of the Baxterian 'Reformed Pastor.'⁵⁶ From a hide-bound, moralizing homilist distracted by mathematics, Chalmers became a zealous, applicatory, and persuasive preacher—an example of earnestness, impressing on his hearers cordially to accept the Gospel offer. Preaching had become the main thing, and that with boldness, anointed by the Holy Ghost. He awoke to his people and their spiritual needs. Their care compelled him to leave his study and deal with them personally, tenderly, even firmly at times but ever wisely. He went from home to home, shepherding the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost made him overseer, studiously knowing them and applying the Word to them. Aiming at the heart through the mind, he diligently catechized them. He trained the lambs of the flock but also full grown adults, honing his skills by practice. One is here reminded of Rutherford's comments on the floor of the Westminster Assembly, “There is as much art in catechising as in anything in the world. It may be doubted, whether every minister do understand the most dexterous way of doing it.”⁵⁷ Certainly Chalmers had achieved some measure of dexterity. But his future ministry affords us a further interpretive lens. From the Tron, Glasgow, to St. John's, to his final bold effort in the slums of

⁵⁶ Richard Baxter, *Gildas Salvianus: the Reformed Pastor. Shewing the Nature of the Pastoral Work; Especially in Private Instruction and Catechizing* (London: Printed by Robert White, for Nevil Simmons, 1656); see also J. William Black, *Reformation Pastors: Richard Baxter and the Ideal of the Reformed Pastor* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2007); and Andrew Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 95-114.

⁵⁷ Westminster Assembly of Divines, *Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines While Engaged in Preparing Their Directory for Church Government, Confession of Faith, and Catechisms (November 1644 to March 1649)*, ed. Alexander F. Mitchell & John P. Struthers (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1874), 92.

Edinburgh,⁵⁸ Chalmers advocated a return not just to a faithful pastoral ministry but to a distinctly parochial ministry in a fast-modernizing world. And it was in Kilmany that Chalmers rediscovered the 'auld paths' of the Reformed parish. Consequently, several features of Chalmers' Kilmany ministry considered in the light of his future career and published works should be noted.

First, parish ministry for Chalmers meant that pastoral ministry was programmatically evangelistic. In many ways, Chalmers' journal at this time is reminiscent of Thomas Boston's classic pastoral soliloquy, *The Art of Man-Fishing*.⁵⁹ "Sunday [August] 4. . . Let me give my whole strength to the conversion and edification of my people."⁶⁰ "Sunday Dec. 8. . . . Let my sole aim be to win souls."⁶¹ It must be understood that in the Church of Scotland ministers and elders were charged with the spiritual care of all souls within their parish boundaries. Yet though a microcosm of Christendom, the parish was not simply a synonym for the congregation – that is, in the wholly voluntary sense 'congregation' is used today. The parish did comprise a *coetus fidelium*, a body of those deemed godly. But a distinction was made, following the Invisible-Visible Church duality. Within the parish, there were those who, being "federally holy" were baptized in infancy, had either not yet made a credible profession of faith or were under discipline and consequently were ineligible to partake the Lord's Supper. Many of these doubtless attended services out of custom, while others were compelled by law; but they could not be viewed as converted. Then over against them were those who had been catechized, examined, and having made a credible profession, had been admitted into full membership of the church. Yet even among these, there were certainly hypocrites, closet Judases who were just as much in need of salvation as the perishing heathen abroad or the ignorant and

⁵⁸ Chalmers' Glasgow ministry began at the Tron in 1815, and in 1819 he transitioned into the new St. John's parish, formed largely out of the Tron's. The ministry at St. John's was geared more particularly to the poor and ended in 1823, when he accepted a call to the Chair of Moral Philosophy at the University of St. Andrews. Chalmers' final experiment occurred after the Disruption, when in 1843 he pioneered the creation of a territorial ministry in the slums of Edinburgh. His involvement there ran from 1844 to his death in May, 1847.

⁵⁹ Thomas Boston, *The Distinguishing Characters of True Believers: To Which is Prefixed a Soliloquy on the Art of Man-Fishing* (Edinburgh: Printed for Alexander M'Laren, 1791).

⁶⁰ Journal, 4 August 1811, NCL CHA 3.1.4.

⁶¹ Journal, 8 December 1811, NCL CHA 3.1.5.

profane at home.⁶² The parish in the 16th and 17th century Kirk, then, was the Augustinian “world” of the parable of the wheat and the tares, writ small. In a real sense, it was viewed as a field 'white unto harvest.' Christian? Yes. Wholly regenerate? No. But more, not all within Scotland recognized the newly reformed Kirk. There was a third category—doubters and antagonists, often Roman Catholic hold-outs, lost souls whom evangelical pastors also sought to win over.⁶³ These three types comprised the parish, all under pastoral charge. Consequently, this head for head, cradle to grave ministry translated into preaching and pastoring that was essentially, not accidentally evangelistic.⁶⁴ Now, this older model had suffered decline in the 18th century in part from the Moderate sinecurists, of whom Chalmers had been a poster-child. Brown also claims that even the more evangelical Popular party Calvinists played a role, who “in effect, also neglected their spiritual charge, by focusing their attention upon the spiritual development of those parishioners who demonstrated election, while neglecting the 'chaff'.”⁶⁵ Chalmers' rediscovery of the parish, then, was also a rediscovery of the older pastor-missionary model, the better system “of olden time”⁶⁶ that refused to neglect any, whether poor or profane.⁶⁷

It was especially at the intersection of evangelism and pastoral visitation that a distinctly

62 John Macpherson, *The Doctrine of the Church in Scottish Theology*, ed. C. G. M'Cre (Edinburgh: MacNiven & Wallace, 1903), 59-90; James Walker, *The Theology and Theologians of Scotland, Chiefly of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Edinburgh: Knox Press, 1872), 117-124.

63 Thomas E. Weir, “Pastoral Care in the Church of Scotland in the Seventeenth Century” (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1960), 178.

64 Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 28-36. Though insinuating an excessive austerity, Todd captures matters in the following insight, “After all, protestantism is all about evangelisation and conversion, and its toughest Calvinist version was never so presumptuous as to claim omniscience about who was elect and who was not. Proclamation of the gospel was not something they had a choice about, and an orderly community made proclamation easier.” *Ibid.*, 406.

65 Brown, *Godly Commonwealth*, 71.

66 Thomas Chalmers, “The Christian Ministry Secularized,” in *Posthumous Works of the Rev. Thomas Chalmers, D.D., LL.D.*, ed. William Hanna (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1849), 6:357-58; see also Chalmers, *Works*, 14:224, 21:72.

67 Chalmers, *Works*, 16:149, 17:316-19, 21:354. While Chalmers never directly invoked the English Puritan Richard Baxter (1615-1691) in this connection, he certainly resonates with Baxter's antipathy to a retreating, gathered church ecclesiology: “Do not do as the lazy Separatists, that gather a few of the best together, and take them only for their charge, leaving the rest to sink or swim . . . If any walk scandalously, and disorderly, deal with them for their recovery, with all diligence and patience; and set before them the hainouness [sic] and danger of their sin; If they prove obstinate after all, then avoid them and cast them off; But do not so cruelly as to unchurch them by hundreds and by thousands, and separate from them as so many Pagans, and that before any such means hath been used for their recovery.” Richard Baxter, *The Saints Everlasting Rest: Containing the Proofs of the Truth and Certain futurity of our Rest* (London: Printed for Thomas Underhill and Francis Tyton, 1654), 321.

parish ministry came alive for Chalmers. Classically, visitation throughout the Kirk was a kind of dragnet, cast out broadly. Pastors and elders visited all souls resident in the parish, not just those who devoutly came to services, were admitted to the Lord's Supper, or who had voluntarily 'signed up' for such pastoral oversight.⁶⁸ This dimension of domestic visitation has become rather foreign to their confessional heirs. With the influence of the Enlightenment on religion and the ascendance of the voluntary, gathered church model in the West, family visitation within Reformed and Presbyterian churches has contracted in its scope, limited to its baptized and communicant members. Only those who opt-in are visited. But upon his conversion and engagement in pastoral ministry, Chalmers began in earnest to visit all the sheep, including such as had wandered and strayed. And when he left Kilmany, he brought his parish ideals to bear on places where parishes were derelict or non-existent, and even where they would “barricade their houses . . . [and] hearts” against the evangelist.⁶⁹ Visitation for the pastor-missionary, then, had an inbuilt, twofold purpose – to pastor the godly and “aggressively” to seek the lost.⁷⁰ The only difference for Chalmers between a parish like Kilmany or one newly formed in a slum, filled with unchurched poor, would simply be the ratio of converts to prospects, or the extent of cultivation.

Parish ministry for Chalmers was also systematic. It is perhaps the case that his mathematical mind predisposed him to this. In his writings on the parish, we encounter frequent analogies drawn from civil and agricultural engineering, ancient and modern, as well as the mechanized world of the Industrial Revolution.⁷¹ But perhaps it was even more on account of his bent for the practical. While writing about reaching the poor several years later, one cannot help but see in the following quote

⁶⁸ This distinction can be observed in a work authorized by the Church of Scotland, often attributed to the revered Covenanter minister and martyr, James Guthrie (1612-1661). Enumerating and confessing the many sins of the Church of Scotland, the ministers confessed among them, “NEGLIGENT, lazy and partial visiting the sick; if they be poor, we go once, and only when sent for; If they be rich and of better note, we go oftener, and unsent for. . . *wearying, or shunning to go to such as we esteem graceless.* Not visiting the People from house to house, nor praying with them at fit opportunities” (italics mine). Church of Scotland, *Causes of the Lords Wrath Against Scotland: Manifested in His Sad Late Dispensations. Whereunto Is Added a Paper, Particularly Holding Forth the Sins of the Ministry [sic]* (Edinburgh: Printed by the Heirs of Geo. Anderson, 1653), 84.

⁶⁹ Chalmers, *Works*, 17:331.

⁷⁰ Chalmers, *Works*, 14:143-44, 18:119, 182.

⁷¹ Chalmers, *Works*, 14:375-76, 17:190-91, 204, 210, 18:272.

something of Chalmers' own experience in Kilmany. People are won over by habitual, not sporadic care:

By every circuit which is made amongst them, there is attained a higher vantage-ground of moral and spiritual influence; and, in spite of all that has been said of the ferocity of a city population, in such rounds of visitation there is none of it to be met with, even among the lowest receptacles of human worthlessness. This is the home walk in which is earned, if not a proud, at least a peaceful popularity—the popularity of the heart—the greetings of men, who, touched even by the cheapest and easiest service of kindness, have nothing to give but their wishes of kindness back again; but, in giving these, have crowned such pious attentions with the only popularity that is worth the aspiring after—the popularity that is won in the bosom of families, and at the side of death-beds.⁷²

It was, after all, the Kilmany experience that convinced him of the “possibility . . . and advantage of assimilating a town [city] to a country parish.”⁷³ Humans are humans wherever they are, susceptible to the influence of love, especially when steadily applied.

Chalmers also went about his labors in Kilmany inductively and experimentally. Considering himself the district's physician of souls, he examined his patients, observing responses and drawing certain conclusions. “April 5. Prayed with more enlargement to John than usual. I see no agitations of remorse: But should this prevent from preaching Christ in His freeness[?] The whole truth is the way to prevent abuses.”⁷⁴ While Scripture principles chastened his experimentation, yet he would vary himself, test, and approve what worked. Even the staples of pastoral practice passed through the crucible of his in-field experience, receiving his personal seal of approval. “[April] 9. Read and commented on a passage of the Bible to John. This I find a very practicable, and I trust effectual way of bringing home the truth to him.”⁷⁵ Also, his keeping of such personal, detailed memoranda of his visits suggests something of the clinical and even may have augured the later work of the then-

⁷² Chalmers, *Works*, 14:50.

⁷³ Chalmers, *Works*, 11:45.

⁷⁴ Thomas Chalmers, “Records of my Spiritual Intercourse with my People,” 5 April 1814, NCL CHA 6.2.4.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 5 April 1814, NCL CHA 6.2.4.

nascent social sciences.⁷⁶ In any case, parish work for Chalmers was not something to be left to impulse or halfway efforts. Souls were at stake, and he was the district physician.

Last, parish ministry for Chalmers meant that pastoral ministry was local. “There is a charm in locality, most powerfully felt by every man who tries it.”⁷⁷ In Kilmany, he got the bug. What dawned on him was that he had inherited not some vague, indefinite area of responsibility, but a very specific, geographically defined one — small enough to manage, but not big enough to discourage. Further, this was a locality with particular people, *his* people, living “contiguously” as next-door neighbors.⁷⁸ He saw firsthand the mysterious power and even the romance of localized Gospel work. When later confronted with the sprawling, degraded masses of Industrial Age Glasgow in 1815, the very untamed frontiers of domestic “heathenism,” he was undaunted.⁷⁹ True, parish boundaries were fast becoming irrelevant as cohesive communities disintegrated into an anonymous, transient, secular throng — and a fearsome powder-keg of social disorder. But Chalmers saw what few others did when he took the pastorate at the Tron Kirk. For him, the beast was tamable because it was divisible.⁸⁰ If missionaries with vision “chalked out” their own little localities and diligently cultivated them as their own spiritual acreage, they could raise up little ‘Kilmanys’ out of the most morally abandoned of districts.⁸¹

In Kilmany, a changed Chalmers had to his great surprise found something *not* a “little new or interesting.” Far from being a ball and chain of wearying “insignificance,” or a moribund relic of older and simpler times, parish ministry took on the aspect of great promise. The old had much to say to the brave new world of post-Enlightenment, Industrialized Christendom. Parish missionaries

76 A. F. Young and E. T. Ashton, *British Social Work in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1956), 67-80; Joel M. Majonis, “William Wilberforce and Thomas Chalmers: Development of Evangelical Christian Thought and Practices into Methodical Charities,” *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work* 26, no. 2 (2007), 63-89. One might also speculate whether visitation journaling might have been a pastoral ‘best practice’ inherited from ministers before him, but manuscript evidence of this kind is scarce. Weir, “Pastoral Care,” 173-74, 179.

77 Chalmers, *Works*, 14:73.

78 Chalmers, *Works*, 18:61, 163.

79 Chalmers, *Works*, 6:269, 18:170, 183.

80 Chalmers, *Works*, 18:90, 96.

81 Chalmers, *Works*, 14:85-87, 172-73, 17:328.

uniting along a frontline of parish missions would fight the secular blight. They would endeavor to resurrect communities on a Christian basis; they would counteract poverty by reintroducing older, rural communal values. But above all, they would seek and save lost souls.