

20th April 2020

Direction

**“The true genius is a mind of large general powers
accidentally determined to some particular direction.”**

Samuel Johnson, Lives of the English Poets

On top of the steeple of Chalmers Memorial Church in Port Seton where I live, there's a weather-vane in the form of a sailing ship. The church, opened in 1905, serves a fishing village, so a ship is an appropriate symbol. I don't know if the fishermen use the weather-vane as a guide or landmark, but I know what it means to me. North, South, East and West, the pointers at the base of the weather-vane, never change. But the ship on the top moves with the wind and can spin round in any direction. The Chalmers weather-vane tells me what's constant and what changes.

When my wife and I are walking the dog, we know well enough when there's a bitter north wind whistling across the Forth, or a belter of an east wind blowing us home along the sea-front. But the Chalmers weather-vane is always there to help. Some things change, the way the wind shifts the ship on the top of the church steeple. But, thankfully, some things don't – North, South, East and West are always fixed.

Facing so many changes just now, our ships may be spinning in all directions. Indeed, I heard someone say today that they are bewildered with things at the moment. Such a lot is changing, perhaps too rapidly, perhaps not quickly enough. But change is the name of the game for us all. So, if that's true, let's give thought to what's constant, the fixed points in our lives – the people who're important to us; the faith that's still there, no matter what; the integrity we and others live by; the principles that we'll always hold to. Perhaps then we'll have a better grasp of what *never* changes, and remember the things we can rely on, no matter what.

What will you still depend on when all of this is over – no matter which way the wind is blowing?

A prayer for today

*“Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.”*

Henry Francis Lyte

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