

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



*Buy me a coffee*

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_sbet-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_sbet-01.php)

## EDITORIAL

International tensions have recently been at the forefront of the news. Today as I write, newspapers report a 'trade war' on the horizon. In the same week there is change in government in Italy and Spain. Relationships between the United States, Russia, China, North and South Korea have frequently been in the news. Tensions have risen again in the Middle East. Closer to home Brexit negotiations are an ongoing concern. In addition we are conscious of the secular ideology increasing in influence. There is much uncertainty and consequently fears arise about the future. How can Christians react?

The Bible teaches repeatedly that we are to 'stand firm' in the Lord. This does not mean Christians are to be unconcerned about these events. Rather we should take a prayerful interest in them. After all, Christians are affected by the decisions made in government. It seems in the West Christians are being increasingly challenged about their convictions. Where judgements have been unfavourable some have been compelled to give up liberties that others enjoy, and have been freely enjoyed in the past, constrained by conscience in their walk with God. These are not easy decisions and can be costly, yet they are decisions made through faith in Christ, and which we believe will be rewarded accordingly.

Should we find ourselves in a trying position of making difficult choices, standing firm in the Lord may mean making a decision that leads to being out of favour with the world, but not with God. In Christ's life, faithfulness led to rejection. Yet God raised him from the dead and overcame evil. The same mind was among the apostles who by the Spirit had firm conviction that whatever happened to them in their walk with Jesus should serve to advance the gospel. Even when it might appear not to be the case, such as when Paul was imprisoned, they believed. Unquestionably their convictions were proven true.

When we worry about how governments will affect us and the world, the Bible brings to our attention the most significant decisions affecting the world have already been made. Revelation 12 opens up a heavenly perspective towards earth. Satan and death have been defeated, 'the salvation and the power and kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come.' Christ offers stability in troubled times.

Consequently Christians overcome evil 'by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.' The Christian's union to Christ in his life, death and resurrection is deeply impressed upon us in this text. Christian faith is not only belief that Christ died and rose from the dead, it is the means by which God

joins us to him in his death and resurrection. Believing in him we can say we died with him that we might live with him. It is because of belief in him and therefore this union to him that we may overcome evil.

In uncertain and tense times assurance is found in Christ to whom, 'all authority in heaven and on earth has been given' (Matthew 28:18). The events of the day can tempt us away from Jesus, we might seek answers elsewhere. However when we ask 'what is going to happen?' with our eyes fixed upon him, the same events can serve as a catalyst to inquire further into the union we have with him through faith. Consequently we may take courage, 'for I have overcome the world'.

CONTRIBUTORS IN THIS NUMBER

Donald Macleod is Professor Emeritus at Edinburgh Theological Seminary

Rose Dowsett is a missiologist and author of several books on Christian mission

Dick Dowsett is a Bible expositor and cross-cultural evangelist

Mike Parker is Middle East Director for SIM (Serving in Mission)

Philip Foster is a doctoral student in Divinity at the University of Edinburgh

The first four papers were delivered at the Scottish Evangelical Theology Society Annual Conference in Glasgow, 21st–22nd March 2017. The Conference title was ‘Re:forming Tomorrow’s Church Today’.