

Articles and Sermons :: Excerpts from George Fox's Writings**Excerpts from George Fox's Writings - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/5/11 13:19**

When I came to eleven years of age, I knew pureness and righteousness; for while a child I was taught how to walk to be kept pure. The Lord taught me to be faithful in all things, and to act faithfully in two ways, viz., inwardly to God, and outwardly to man; and to keep to Yea and Nay in all things. For the Lord showed me, that though the people of the world have mouths full of deceit, and changeable words, yet I was to keep to Yea and Nay in all things; and my words should be few and savoury, seasoned with grace; and that I might not eat and drink to make myself wanton, but for health, using the creatures in their service, as servants in their places, to the glory of Him that created them; they being in their covenant, and I being brought up into the covenant, as sanctified by the Word which was in the beginning, by which all things are upheld; wherein is unity with the creation.

Now during the time that I was at Barnet, a strong temptation to despair came upon me. Then I saw how Christ was tempted, and mighty troubles was I in; sometimes I kept myself retired in my chamber, and often walked solitary in the chace there, to wait upon the Lord. ...I was about twenty years of age when these exercises came upon me; and I continued in that condition some years, in great troubles, and fain would have put it from me. I went to many a priest to look for comfort, but found no comfort from them.

About the beginning of the year 1646, as I was going to Coventry, and entering towards the gate, a consideration arose in me, how it was said that all Christians are believers, both Protestants and Papists; and the Lord opened to me that, if all were believers, then they were all born of God, and passed from death to life, and that none were true believers but such; and though others said they were believers, yet they were not.

At another time, as I was walking in a field on a First-day morning, the Lord opened to me that being bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ... Did the not apostle say to the believers, that 'they needed no man to teach them, but as the anointing teacheth them'? ...my relations...were grieved because I would not go ... But I brought them Scriptures and told them there was an anointing within man to teach him, and that the Lord would teach His people Himself.

At another time it was opened to me that God, who made the world, did not dwell in temples made by hands. This, at the time, seemed a strange word, because both priests and people used to call their temples or churches dreadful places, holy ground, and the temples of God. But the Lord showed me, so that I did see clearly, that He did not dwell in these temples which men had commanded and set up, but in people's hearts....

But as I had forsaken the priests, so I left the Separate preachers also, and those called the most experienced people; for I saw there was none among them all that could speak to my condition. And when all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do; then, oh! then I heard a voice which said, 'There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition': and when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy. ...and this I knew experimentally. My desires after the Lord grew stronger, and zeal in the pure knowledge of God, and of Christ alone, without the help of any man, book, or writing. For though I read the Scriptures that spake of Christ and of God, yet I knew Him not, but by revelation, as He who hath the key did open, and as the Father of Life drew me to His Son by His Spirit. Then the Lord gently led me along, and let me see his love, which was endless and eternal, surpassing all knowledge that men have in the natural state, or can get by history or books; and that love let me see myself, as I was without Him. I was afraid of all company, for I saw them perfectly where they were, through the love of God, which let me see myself.

I also saw that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love which flowed over the ocean of darkness. In that also I saw the infinite love of God; and I had great openings.

Now was I come up in spirit through the flaming sword, into the paradise of God. All things were new; and all the creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter. I knew nothing but pureness, and innocency, and righteousness, being renewed up into the image of God by Christ Jesus, to the state of Adam, which he was in before he fell. The creation was opened to me; and it was shewed me how all things had their names given them according to their nature and virtue. And I was at a stand in my mind whether I should practice physic for the good of mankind, seeing the nature and virtues of the creatures were so opened to me by the Lord. But I was immediately taken up in spirit, to see

e into another or more steadfast state than Adam's in innocency, even into a state in Christ Jesus that should never fall. ...Great things did the Lord lead me into, and wonderful depths were opened unto me beyond what can by words be declared; but as people come into subjection to the Spirit of God, and grow up in the image and power of the Almighty, they may receive the word of wisdom, that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being.

Moreover, when the Lord sent me forth into the world, He forbade me to put off my hat to any, high or low; and I was required to Thee and Thou all men and women, without any respect to rich or poor, great or small. And as I travelled up and down...I was not to bow or scrape with my leg to any one....

But the black earthly spirit of the priests wounded my life; and when I heard the bell toll to call people together to the steeple-house, it struck at my life; for it was just like a market-bell.... Oh! the vast sums of money that are gotten by the trade they make of selling the Scriptures, and by their preaching.... notwithstanding the Scriptures were given forth freely, and Christ commanded His ministers to preach freely....

And he told the people that was the Scriptures, by which they were to try all doctrines, religions, and opinions. Now ...I could not hold, but was made to cry out "Oh, no, it is not the Scriptures." But I told them what it was, namely, the Holy Spirit, by which the holy men of God gave forth the Scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgments were to be tried; for it led into all Truth, and gave knowledge of all Truth.

I told them I knew from whence all wars arose, even from the lust, according to James' doctrine; and that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars.

That which I was moved to declare was this: that...as the Spirit of God was in them that gave forth the Scriptures, so the same Spirit of God must be in them that come to understand the Scriptures...and without this Spirit they can know neither God nor Christ, nor the Scriptures, nor have right fellowship with one another.

The ministers of the Spirit must minister to the Spirit that is in prison, which hath been in captivity in every one, that with the Spirit of Christ people may be led out of captivity up to God, the Father of Spirits, do service to Him, and have unity with Him, with the Scriptures, and with one another. Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come; that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one; whereby in them ye may be a blessing, and make the witness of God in them to bless you; then to the Lord God you will be a sweet savour, and a blessing.... (from an epistle)

Take heed of many words; what reacheth to the life, settles in the life. ...the work now is, to settle and stay in the life. ...be watchful and careful in all meetings ye come into; for where Friends are gathered together, they are many times gathered into their own measure. When a man is come newly out of the world...he had take heed that he not be rash. For now, when he comes into a silent meeting, that is another state; then he must come, and feel his own spirit, how it is, when he comes to them that are silent. ...So, Friends, come into that which is over all the spirits of the world, fathoms all the spirits of the world, and stands in the patience; with that, ye may see where others stand, and reach that which is of God in every one. Here is no strife, no contention, out of transgression; for he that goeth into strife, and into contention, is from the pure spirit....

When thou art in the transgression of the life of God in thy own particular, the mind flies up in the air...and the creature being led out of its course, it comes to be all on fire, in the transgression; and that defaceth the glory of the first body. Therefore be still awhile from thy own thoughts, searching, seeking, desires, and imaginations, and be staid in the principle of God in thee, that it may raise thy mind up to God, and stay it upon God, and thou wilt find strength from him, and find him to be a God at hand, a present help in the time of trouble, and of need. And thou being come to the principle of God, which hath been transgressed, it will keep thee humble; and the humble, God will teach his way, which is peace, and such he doth exalt. (from a letter to Lady Claypole)

Re: Excerpts from George Fox's Writings , on: 2011/5/11 13:23

Oh! To gain such a heart!

Thanks Greg.