

A SELECTION OF PASSAGES FROM

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THE EPISTLES OF  
GEORGE FOX

## THE EPISTLES

To that of God in you both I speak, and do beseech you both for the Lord's sake to return within, and wait to hear the voice of the Lord there; and waiting there, and keeping close to the Lord, a discerning will grow, that you may distinguish the voice of the stranger when ye hear it. . . . Oh! be faithful, be faithful to the Lord in that ye know. Epistle 5 (1652)

Stand still in that which shews and discovers; and there doth strength immediately come: And stand still in the light and submit to it, and the other will be hush'd and gone; and then content comes. And when temptations and troubles appear, sink down in that which is pure, and all will be hush'd and fly away. Epistle 10 (1652)

None of you be sayers [only] but doers of the word. Epistle 13 (1652)

Know one another in the power of an endless life which doth not change . . . keep your meetings in that which changeth not, that nothing but Christ may reign in you. Epistle 23 (1653)

O Friends, mind the Seed of God and the life of Christ! And take heed of being hurried with many thoughts, but live in that which

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goes over them all, that in it ye may reign and live in the Seed of God. Epistle 52 (1653)

Your strength is, to stand still, that ye may receive refreshings: that ye may know how to wait, and how to walk before God, by the spirit within you. . . . And Friends, everywhere meet together, . . . and watch over one another in that which is eternal, and see everyone, that your words be from the eternal life. Epistle 43 (1653)

The kernel is [to be found] within, the husk without. . . . They are outsiders who feed on outsides. Epistle 46 (1653)

For the saints, which were to honor all men, they were in that of God, which did reach to that of God in all men. Epistle 53 (1653)

All Friends, be low and in the life of God dwell to keep you low. Epistle 62 (1654)

Wait all on the Lord, that ye may be settled and stayed in the Lord. . . . No creature can read the Scriptures to profit thereby, but who come to the light and Spirit that gave them forth. Epistle 65 (1654)

Live in the Seed, and there ye will feel the ministry of the life and spirit in your own particulars, in which ye may be serviceable to others, that are without, and among yourselves. Epistle 84 (1655)

Take heed of wronging the world or anyone in bargains, or overreaching them: but dwell in the cool, sweet, and holy power of the Lord God, and in righteousness, that it may run down amongst you; and that will keep you low. . . . There is the danger and temptation to you, of drawing your minds into your business, and clogging

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them with it; so that you can hardly do anything in the service of God, but there will be crying, my business, my business, and your minds will go into the things, and not over the things . . . and so when your minds are got into the riches, and cumbered therewith, ye go back into that ye were before . . . then that mind that is cumbered, it will fret, being out of the power of God. Epistle 131 (1656)

All Friends everywhere, meet together, and in the measure of God's spirit wait, that with it all your minds may be guided up to God and to receive wisdom from God. . . . And Friends, meet together; . . . and know one another in that which is eternal, in the Light which was, before the world was. . . . And if ye turn from this Light, ye grow strange; and so neglecting your meetings, ye grow cold, and your minds run into the earth, and grow weary and slothful and careless, and heavy and sottish, and dull and dead. Epistle 149 (1657)

And none go beyond the measure of the spirit of God, nor quench it; for where it is quenched, it cannot try things. So if you have anything upon them to speak, in the life of God stand up, and speak it, if it be but two or three words, and sit down again; and keep in the life, that ye may answer that of God in every man upon the earth. Epistle 150 (1657)

And when Friends have finished their business, sit down and continue a while, quietly, and wait upon the Lord to feel him; and go not beyond the power, but keep in the power, by which God Almighty may be felt among you. Epistle 162 (1658)

To all the . . . chosen and faithful, who are the gold tried in the fire . . . who have been tried by goods spoiling, by bonds, by whippings, by mockings and reproaches . . . and some have been tried by death; and ye have proved to be pure gold, that hath come out brighter and brighter. Who have not feared the waves of the seas, nor the winds; who fears not the storms or the weather; whose anchor

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holds, which is the hope, the mystery, which anchors the soul which is immortal, to the immortal God. Epistle 167 (1658)

All Friends everywhere, who are dead to carnal weapons, and have beaten them to pieces, stand in that which takes away the occasions of wars, in the power which saves men's lives, and destroys none, nor would have others. Epistle 177 (1659)

And your growth in the Seed is in the silence, where ye may find a feeding of the bread of life . . . and there is innocence and simplicity of heart and spirit is lived in and the life is fed on. Epistle 181 (1659)

And Friends, take heed of blending yourselves with the outward powers of the earth. Epistle 188 (1659)

And it may be, there will be a time of shearing and clipping; but the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. So mind him to be your portion, and the Seed, Christ your all, and your life; and fear not the losing the fleece, for it will grow again . . . in him sit down in life and peace and rest. Epistle 194 (1660)

Lay hands upon no man suddenly, I warn you and charge you all in the presence of the living God, but touch the witness of God in everyone. Epistle 195 (1660)

And know the power and life of God in one another, which gave forth the Scriptures, which was before the Scripture was: which life had unity in. So in the life, God Almighty preserve you. Epistle 197 (1660)

In this your day of trial, . . . though ye have not a foot of ground to stand upon, yet ye have the power of God to skip and to leap in;

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standing in that which is your life, that is everlasting. . . . And prisons, fetters, dungeons, and sufferings, what are they to you? . . . for ye are met and gathered into the fold of Christ Jesus . . . and he being among you felt, and in you all, ye will have every one of you, in your own particular, joy, peace, comfort, consolation, assurance, confidence, and satisfaction. . . . You who know the Shepherd and his crook, which plucks you out, he shows you the pastures of life in which you must feed. Epistle 206 (1661)

In the power of God and his immortal Seed dwell. Epistle 209 (1661)

Keep low in the power . . . and live up in the seed which was before the devil was. Epistle 212 (1661)

Above all things take heed of judging one another, for in that ye may destroy one another, and leave one another behind, and drive one another back into the world, and eat out the good of one another . . . so go on in the Truth, answering it in every one in the inward parts and in the power of God . . . in that is your life. Epistle 219 (1662)

[There is] no knowing the Scriptures but by the same Holy Ghost that moved the Holy men to give them forth . . . to know a fellowship with Christ in his death and sufferings is above the fellowship of bread and wine, which will have an end; but the fellowship of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit hath no end. Epistle 230 (1663)

Therefore in Christ that never fell, the peace and rest, and light and life and the power of Truth live. Epistle 232 (1664)

If you do not go forth from the Light, Spirit, and Truth within, the Light you will feel to guide and lead you, and instruct you and by

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it you may have immortality put upon you: and be not ashamed of Christ Jesus the light, and life and teacher; nor of his spirit to lead you. Epistle 238 (1664)

For people must not be always talking, and hearing, but they must come into obedience to the great God of heaven and earth. Epistle 248 (1666)

Mind the hidden man of the heart . . . keep justice and truth in all your dealings and tradings, in equity, in yea and nay . . . that they may preach to all that you have to deal withal, answering the equal principle in all. . . . And so, walk in the Light as children of the Light, and of the day. Epistles 250-251 (1667)

And God having given them his dominion and flavor, lose it not, but rather increase it in the life; for at first ye know that many could not take so much money in your trade as to buy bread with; all people stood aloof to you, when you stood upright . . . but now you, through your life, come to answer that of God in all, they say, they will trust you before their own people, knowing that you will not cheat, nor wrong, nor cozen, nor oppress them: for the cry is now amongst them that are without, where is there a Quaker of such and such a trade? So they will deal with Friends before they will deal with their own. O therefore Friends, who have purchased this through great sufferings, lose not this great favor which God hath given you, but that you may answer the witness of God in every man, which witnesseth to your faithfulness, that they may glorify your Father on your behalf. Epistle 251 (1667)

Wait in his power and Light, that ye may be children of the Light, by believing in the Light which is the life in Christ; that you may be grafted into him, the true root, and built upon him, the true foundation. Epistle 288 (1672)

Let your lives and conversation preach, that with a measure of

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the spirit of God you may reach to that of God in all. Epistle 319  
(1675)

Dear Friends, with my love to you and all of the rest of the faithful Friends in bonds; and my desire is to the Lord, that ye all may stand faithful and valiant in his glorious name, and for his holy peaceable truth now in this day of storm and tempest. . . . I am a witness for God in all my sufferings and imprisonments and hailing before magistrates about sixty times, about this thirty-sixth year.

And so, Friends, when you are tried, you may come forth more precious than gold that is tried in the fire; and keep the word of patience. . . . Epistle 377 (1682)

(Epistle to all who go to plant new farms in America)

In all places where you do outwardly live and settle, invite all the Indians, and their Kings, and have meetings with them, or they with you; so that you may make inward plantations with the light and power of God and the grace, truth, and spirit of Christ, and with it you may answer the light of truth, and spirit of God, in the Indians, their Kings and their people; and so by it you may make heavenly plantations in their hearts for the Lord, and so beget them in God, that they may serve and worship him, and spread the truth abroad; and so that you may all be kept warm in God's love, power, and zeal, for the honor of his name. Epistle 379 (1682)

(Epistle to Charlestown in Carolina telling of situations of Quakers in Britain in 1683)

We are here under great persecution, betwixt thirteen and four-hundred hundred in prison; an account of which hath been lately delivered to the King. Besides the great spoil and havoc which is made of Friends' goods, by informers; and besides the great spoil of about two-thirds of our estates, and upon the Twenty-Pound a month Acts (levies) for not going to the Steeple-house; and besides many being imprisoned and praemunired for not swearing allegiance, both men, women, widows, and maids: and many are fined and sent into prison as rioters, for meeting to worship God, and we are kept out of our meetings in streets and highways and many places of the land, and

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beaten and abused. And therefore prize the liberty, both natural and spiritual, that you enjoy. And many are cast into prison because they cannot pay the priests' tithes. So that at present we are under great sufferings, persecutions, and imprisonments; but the Lord's power is over all, and that supports his people. Epistle 386 (1683)

I say again if it please the Lord and be his will to try you in stinking prisons and dungeons, Brideswells, houses of correction, and suffer you to be put in such places . . . I say the Lord can sanctifie such places . . . his people are all in the hand, and under the wings of Christ. . . Pray for the enemies that put you there; and if they curse and hate you, you are to bless them, and do good to them. . . . Keep under the wing of Christ and in him is your sanctuary and saviour who destroys the destroyer, and is over all the first and the last. Epistle 398 (1684)

Dispatch business quickly, and keep out of long debates and heats . . . be swift to hear, and slow to speak, and let it be in the grace, which seasons all words. Epistle 418 (1690)

Dear Friends, something was upon me to write unto you, that such among Friends who marry, and provide great dinners, that instead thereof, it will be good savour on such occasions, that they may be put in mind at such time, to give some thing to the poor that be widows and fatherless, and such like, to make them a feast, or to refresh them: and this I look upon, would be a very good savour, to feast the poor that cannot feast you again . . . and would be a means to keep the mind to the Lord; and in remembrance of the poor; for they that give to the poor lend to the Lord and the Lord will repay them. Epistle 419 (1690)