

Roots and Fruits of Early Friends

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Photo. Old Cedar Tree Timoney

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INTRODUCTION:

Notes on Background and Editorial Policy

Note this edition needs further editing apologies in advance

The unusual capitalisation found in much of the text was reproduced here as found in the original documents. While most of the old spelling has been updated, some of the old English words like “saith” (instead of modern “said”) have been left to leave a flavour of the old.

Sections in bold were sections this Editor chose to have highlighted in the text. *Major quotations are in italics.*

Actions often speak much louder than words, so let us try and find out what the message of early Friends was by considering their actions, and in particular, what they felt to be really important; what they were imprisoned for and the reasons given for why they took the actions they were imprisoned for.

Most of the following reasoning is taken from George Fox’s writings:

1. His Epistles published in 1702.
2. Gospel Truth Demonstrated (GTD). Also called George Fox’s Doctrinals, published in 1706. The appendixes include many sections from GTD that contrast the Old Testament and Old Covenant from New Testament and New Covenant. Where George Fox said the new had abolished the old ^{Hebrews 8:13}, the word “**abolished**” is in red.
3. George Fox’s Journal – Biography by William Sewel
 - Norman Penny’s verbatim et literatim edition of 1911 from still-available) original documents.
 - George Fox’s Formative years, 1624-51 now published by CBL Services Ltd as a booklet (available for free download www.cblfriend.com). and

based on a document given to William Sewel which was written in George Fox's life time and which forms Chapter 1 of Sewel's History published 1622.

4. The tract, "To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom," was produced, by George Fox as Friends reached out to London in 1653. It was printed again in 1655 on behalf of Quakers.

- Copies of the original survive, and 50 years later a slightly modified version was included as the opening section in "Gospel Truth Demonstrated" (GTD). As required, this 1706 version was approved by a Meeting of Ministers and Elders in London at that time, so it is a reliable source of what Friends were then saying. (In 2001 on behalf of George Fox Project Trust, Joseph Pickvance edited a version - dividing it into convenient sections. As I consider the 1706 version easier to comprehend, I have produced a version of GTD text divided into similar sections to the 2001 version, and at the same time added notes and eliminated significant error found in the 2001 edition. An extract from it is included in Chapter 3.

Chapter One

Fruits and Roots

Overview of Booklet.

This booklet contains most of what is in *Towards Understanding the Basis for Early Friends Lives* as well as the *Formative Years* of several friends .

From the fruits of early Friends' lives, this booklet seeks to find the roots from which those fruits sprung. It goes back to what was written in 1653 to find out the nature of the "light" in those days.

Let us start by considering what early Friends felt to be really important - what they were willing to go to prison for. From the headlines here, the Appendices give detail from George Fox's writings as to why the following (in bold) were important. (Please give consideration to what Friends were willing to be imprisoned for - below each are some references):

Preaching - Detailed in Appendix 1

Going into all the world to preach the Gospel.

[Mark 16:15 Matthew 28:18-20 e.g. George Fox Derby 1650 Elizabeth Fletcher Dublin 1655 1650 Mary Dyer Boston Acts 1:8]

Worship - Detailed in Appendix 2

Gathering in the name of Jesus to worship God in Spirit and Truth.

[Matthew 18:20 e.g. Reading Meeting etc. Dublin 1683 John 4:23-24]

Refusing to Swear Oaths. Faithfulness. Avoiding Deceit. One Standard of Truth - Detailed in Appendix 3

Swear not at all and let your yes be yes and no be no. [Matthew 5:34-37 James 5:12]

Refusing to Serve in Army or Fight - Detailed in Appendix 4

Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you. Carnal weapons no longer allowed even though permitted under old covenant. [Luke 6:27 & 35 Matthew 5:43-48 George Fox Derby 1650; 2 Corinthians 10:4]

Refusing to pay tithes - Detailed in Appendix 5

Freely you have received freely give. Old Covenant with its tithes to support priesthood replaced by Gospel of the kingdom. [Matthew 10:8 John Haddock 1672 Roger Kirk 1672, 1675 whose who died in prison. Richard Poole Wexford 17/3/1665 & Francis Hobson Armagh 1675]

Similar Respect for All - Detailed in Appendix 6

Refusing to treat the wealthy with more respect by taking off their hats and using different language to those above them in society. James 2:1-17. Recognising ‘that of God’ in Slaves.” Letter to Governor of Barbados

In 1659 when 1690 friends were imprisoned for speaking truth in various places, for not paying tithes, for meeting together in the fear of God, for not swearing, for wearing their hats, (treating people equally) for being accounted vagrants, for visiting Friends, out of love for their brethren in prison, houses of corrections, and dungeons, some persecuted to death, 164 men friends signed a letter to the British Parliament offering to go into prison in place of their Friends.

Chapter Two - Why

The Question must be asked, “Why did early Friends come up with similar conclusions to each other on important subjects? This chapter attempts to answer that question. Starting with George Fox’s Experience

Chapter Three - The Word of God and Nature of the Light,

Here some 1653 text sets out how George Fox saw Jesus Christ as the Word of God. The impact and nature of the ‘light’ is revealed.

Chapter Four - Why Different Ideals

Why did early Friends end up with different ideals than others who professed to be Christians?

Chapter Five - Which ‘God’ Are We Talking Of

Who are we listening to? I hope that what you read will have the ring of ‘truth’ to you even if you do not find it a comfortable read.

Chapter Two

Why?

What did all the actions of Friends, (outlined in Chapter One Overview), have in common?

Let’s start with George Fox’s account of his formative years

GEORGE FOX JOURNAL 1624-1650¹

Parents and Childhood

George Fox was born at Drayton² in Leicestershire, in England, in the month called July, in the year 1624, from parents who were members of the public Church, or Church of England, *as appeareth to me from ‘a certain document about his life he ordered someone to write down which was sent to me at my request.’³* His Father was Christopher Fox, a weaver by trade, an honest man, and⁴ of such a virtuous life that his neighbours were used to call him righteous Christer. His mother was Mary Largo, an upright woman and of the Stock of the martyrs. This George Fox was, even in his minority, endued with gravity and stayedness of mind, that is seldom seen in children; so that seeing how old people carried themselves lightly and wantonly, had such an aversion to it, that he would say within himself, ‘If I ever come to be a man, surely I will not be so wanton’.

¹ Biography taken from SEWEL’S History as considered more reliable.

²[In the Clay](#)

³ Kees Neiuwerth’s translation of Dutch is used in text instead of “a paper in his lifetime, drawn up by his Order at my request sent to me” because Kees’ translation does not have implication that paper was drawn up by George Fox at William Sewel’s request, which Editor thinks was unintentional implication of the English.

His Parents in the mean while endeavoured to train him up, as they did their other children, in the common way of worship, his mother especially contributed thereto, as being eminent in Piety, but even from a child he was seen in another frame of mind than his brethren for he was more religious, retired, still, and solid, and was also observing beyond his age, as appeared from the answers he gave, and the questions he asked concerning religious matters, to the astonishment of those that heard him. His mother, seeing this extraordinary temper and godliness, which so early did shine through him, so that he would not meddle with childish plays, did not think it fit to trouble him about the way of worship, but carried herself indulgent towards him. Meanwhile he learned to read pretty well, and to write so much as would serve him afterwards to signify his meaning to others. When he was come to eleven Years of Age, he endeavoured to live a pure and righteous Life, and to be faithful in all things, viz. **inwardly** towards God, and outwardly to man; since the Lord **by his good Spirit** had shewed him, that he was to keep his word always, and ought not to commit excess in eating or drinking. He thus growing up in virtue, some of his relations were for having him train up in the school, to make a Priest of him; but others persuaded to the contrary; and so he was put to a shoemaker that dealt also in wool and in cattle.

Apprentice Shepard

Being employed then by his master, he took most delight in sheep, and was very skilful in what belonged thereto, for it was an employment that very well suited his mind; and his thus being a shepherd, was, *as an eminent author said, a just Emblem of his business*, and minded it so well that his master was successful in his trade while George was with him. He often used in his dealings the word “*verily*”, and then he kept so strict to it,

⁴ There was a seed of God in him

that people who knew him would say, “If George says verily, there is no altering him”.

Context

William Sewell added (text in italics), Now, though my design is not to give a description of state-affairs, yet I find it necessary to mention something of the chief temporal occurrences in England, in as much as they have relation to the affairs of the church; lest my History might seem an incomplete work. Transiently therefore I will say that in England about this time appeared the beginnings of a civil war, in which religion had some share; for the bishops began to introduce several Innovations, and caused not only rails to be made about the communion table, which now was called the High Altar; but those who approached it bowed thrice and a bow was made at pronouncing the name of Jesus. Thus ceremonies increased from time to time; and those preachers that were really religious, and spoke most of edification, were sighted and set by; the bishops in their visitations, minding chiefly to promote such rites as favoured popery. And this was not only done in England, but in Scotland also. Endeavours were made to bring in episcopacy. This caused ferment among the people, which, when it came to an insurrection, they generally believed it was for religion’s sake, which made some cry in the open streets, where there was any confluence of people, “To your tents, O Israel”. And because the Parliament was of the opinion that King Charles 1 encroached upon their privileges, which they would not suffer; this so exasperated the prince, that he brought together an army and set up his Standard, first on the Castle in Nottingham, where it was blown down the same evening, on the 25th of the Month called August in the year 1642. But before that time, the King had taken possession of some fortified places and the Parliament on the other hand had also got some in their power. Sometime after a battle was fought between the Royalists and the Parliament, near Edge-Hill in Warwickshire, where neither party prevailed much. About this time:

Attendance at a Fair

George Fox, who more and more endeavoured to lead a godly Life, being come to the nineteenth year of his age, it happened at a fair, that a cousin of his and another coming to him asked whether he would drink a jug of

beer with them? He being thirsty, said, “Yes”, and went with them to an Inn. After each had drunk a glass, they began to drink ‘healths’, and said, he that would not drink should pay for all. This grieved George, seeing that people who professed to be religious, behaved themselves thus, and therefore he rose up to be gone; and putting his hand in his pocket, he took a groat, and laid it down upon the table, saying, “If it be so, I’ll leave you”, and so he went away; and when his business was done, he returned home; but he did not go to bed, that night, but prayed, and cried earnestly to the Lord; and it seemed to him that his supplications were answered after this manner, ‘Thou seest how the young people gather together into vanity and old people into the earth, therefore thou must forsake all, both young and old and be a stranger to them’. **This which he took to be a Divine admonition, made such a powerful Impression on his mind that he resolved to break off all familiar fellowship and conversation with young and old, and even leave his relations, and to live a separate and retired life.** On the ninth of September in the year 1643 he went to Northampton where he also made some stay, and there passed to Newport-Pagnel in Buckinghamshire; and after having stayed a while there, he went to Barnet whither he came in the Summer⁵ month in the year 1644.

Solitary Seeker

While he led this solitary life he fasted often, and read the Holy Scriptures diligently, so that some Professors took notice of him, and sought to be acquainted with him, but he soon perceiving that they did not possess what they professed shunned their company. In time he fell into strong temptations, almost to despair, and was in mighty trouble, sometimes keeping himself retired in his chamber, and often walking solitary to wait upon the Lord. In this state he saw how Christ had been tempted; but when he looked to his own condition, he wondered and said, “Was I ever

⁵ Summer used from the Dutch text instead of June in English - Elwood 4th month.

so before?" He began to think also that he had done amiss against his relations, because he had forsaken them; and he called to mind his former times to consider whether he had wronged any. Thus temptations grew more and more; and when Satan could not effect his design upon him in the Way, he laid snares for him to draw him to commit some sin, thereby to bring him to despair. He was about twenty years of age, and continued a long while in this condition, and would fain have put it from him; which made him go to a priest to look for comfort, but he did not find it from them. [In this miserable state](#) he went to London in hope of finding some relief among the professors of that city, but being come there, he saw many darkened in their understandings. He had an uncle there - one Pickering, a Baptist, and those of that persuasion were tender then; yet he could not resolve to impart his mind to them, or join with them, because he saw all - young and old where they were. Though some of the best would have him staid there, yet he was fearful, and so returned homewards; having understood that his parents and relations were troubled at his absence. He would rather go to them again lest he should grieve them.

Now when he was come into Leicestershire, his relations would have him married; but he [prudently](#) told them, he was but a lad, and must get wisdom. Others would have had him in the auxiliary band among the forces [of the Parliament, which being entered now into an intestine war with the King, had, with their forces this year, beaten not only the king's army under Prince Rupert, but also conquered the city of York.](#) [But to persuade George to list himself a soldier was so against his mind,](#) that he refused it and went to Coventry, where he took a chamber for a while at a professor's house, where he staid some time, there being many people in that town who endeavoured to live religiously. After some time he went into his own country again, and was there about a year, in great sorrows and trouble, walking many nights by himself. Then Nathaniel Stevens the

priest of Drayton, (*The town of George's Birth*) would often come to him and George to the priest, and when Stevens visited him he would sometimes bring another priest along with him, and then George Fox would ask questions and reason with them. Once Stevens asked him why Christ cried out upon the Cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me and why He said, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will but thine be done?" To this, George Fox answered thus: "At that time the sins of all mankind were upon Christ, and their iniquities and transgressions with which He was wounded, which He was to bear, and to be an offering for them, as he was man, but died not as he was God; and so, in that he died for all men, and tasted death for every man, he was an offering for the sins of the whole world." When George Fox spoke this, he was in a measure sensible of Christ's sufferings, and what he went through. His saying did so please the Priest that he said, it was a very good, full answer, and such an one as he had not heard. He would also applaud and speak highly of George Fox to others, and what George said in discourse to him, that he would preach on the First Day of the week, for which George did not like him.

Despair and Temptation

After some time he went to see an ancient priest in Mansetter in Warwickshire, and reasoned with him about the ground of despair and temptation; but he being altogether ignorant of George's condition, bid him take tobacco, and sing Psalms. **But George signified that he was** no lover of tobacco and as for Psalms, he was not in a state to sing. Then the Priest bid him come again and that then he would tell him many things. But when George came, the priest was angry and pettish, for George's former words had displeased him; and he was so indiscrete, what George Fox told him of his sorrows and griefs, he told again to his servants so that it got among the milk lasses; which grieved him to have opened his mind

to such an one and he saw they were all miserable comforters. Then he heard of a priest living about Tamworth, who was accounted an experienced man, and therefore he went to him, but found him like an empty hollow cask. Hearing afterwards of one Dr Craddock of Coventry, he went to him also and asked whence temptations and despair did arise, and how troubles came to be wrought in man. The priest, **instead of answering, asked him**, who was Christ's father and mother? And George told him, Mary was his Mother, and he was supposed to be the Son of Joseph, but he was the Son of God. Now as they were walking together in Dr Craddock's garden, it happened that George in turning, set his foot on the side of a bed, which so disturbed the teacher, as if the house had been on fire, and thus all the discourse was lost; and George Fox went away in sorrow, worse than when he came, seeing he found none that could reach his condition. After this he went to one Macham a priest of high account; **and he no more skilful than the others**, was for giving George some physick, and bleeding him; but they could get not one drop of blood from him, either in the arms or the head - his body being dried up in sorrows, grief and trouble, which were so great upon him, that he could have wished never to have been born to behold the vanity and wickedness of men; or that he had been born blind and so he might never have seen it; and deaf that he might never have heard vain and wicked words and the Lord's name blasphemed.

Christmas and Weddings

And when the time called Christmas came, while others were feasting and sporting themselves, he went from house to house, looking for poor widows, and giving them some money. And when he was invited to marriages (as sometimes he was) he would go to none at all; but the next day or soon after, he went and visited those that were newly married; and if they were poor, he gave them some money, for he had wherewith both

to keep himself from being chargeable to others and to administer something to the needful.

Whilst the mind of George Fox was thus in trouble, the state of England was also in a great stir; for the parliament was for turning out of bishops and introducing Presbyterian Directory; which however as yet could not well be effected, although William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, had been made to stoop to the block and the powers of the King by this time much weakened; for his army was this summer near Nesby, not far from Leicester, overcome by an army of untrained bands, and six thousand men among which many great Officers were taken prisoners, and his Cabinet, with abundance of Letters of great moment was seized; insomuch, that some skirmishes were held but no decisive battle was fought afterwards. But since a circumstantial description of the state of affair is not within my design, I'll return to:

True Believers and University Education

George Fox, at the beginning of the year **1646** was going to Coventry, and entering toward the gate a consideration arose in him, how it was said that all Christians are believers both Protestants and Papists; And it was opened to him, that if all were believers, then they were all born of God⁶, 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 he was walking in a field on a first day morning, it was discovered unto his understanding that to be bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to make a man a minister of Christ. At this he wondered because it was the common belief of people; but for all that, he took this to be Divine revelation, and he admired the goodness of the Lord, **believing now the ordinary ministers not to be such as they pretended to be. This made him unwilling to go any more to church, as it were called, to hear the Priest Stevens, believing that he could not profit thereby; and therefore instead of going there, he would get into the orchard, or the fields, by himself with his Bible, which he esteemed above all books, seeking thus to**

⁶ Not a frequently used phrase, but topic at start of chapter 1 of Gospel Truth Demonstrated printed 1706

be edified in solitariness. At this his relations were much troubled: but he told them, “Did not John the apostle say to the believers, that they needed no man to teach them; but as the anointing teacheth them?” And though they knew this to be Scripture, and that it was true, yet it grieved them because he would not go to hear the priest with them, but separated himself from their way of worship; for he saw now that true believer was another thing than they looked on it to be; and that being bred at the universities did not qualify a man to be a minister of Christ. Thus he lived by himself, not joining with any, nay, not of the dissenting people, but became a stranger to all, relying wholly upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

Temples – God’s Dwelling Place

Sometime after it was opened to him, that God, who made the world did not dwell in temples made with hands⁷. And though this seemed at first strange to him, because both priest and people used to call their churches dreadful places, holy ground, and temples of God, yet it was immediately shewed him, that the Lord did not dwell in these temples which man had erected, but in people’s hearts, and that His people were the temple he dwelt in. This was discovered to him when he was walking in the fields to the house of one of his relations. When he came there, it was told him, that Nathaniel Stevens, the priest, had been there and told them he was afraid of Fox for going after new lights. This made him smile because he saw the true state of the priests. But he said nothing of it to his relations, who though they saw that something more was required than the vulgar way of worship, yet they continued therein, being grieved because he would not also go to hear the priests. Only he told them there was an anointing in man to teach him⁸; and that the Lord would teach his people himself⁹. He had great openings now concerning the things written in

⁷ Acts 7:48 Acts 17:24

⁸ 1 John 2:17 and 27

⁹ Hebrews 8:8-12, Hebrews 10:16 Jeremiah 31:33-34

Revelations; and when he spoke of them, the priest and professors would say, that was a sealed up book. But to this he said, “Christ could open the Seals; and that the things contained in the Book, very nearly concerned us; since the epistles of the apostle were written to the saints of those times, but the Revelations to point to things to come.”

Women without Souls?

In England in those days were people of very odd notions, and among the rest such as held, that women have no souls. He, lighting on some of these, could not forbear reproving them, [since the Scripture, as he told them plainly, held forth the contrary; for the blessed Virgin Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.](#)

10

Fox’s insight regarding Dreams

He also came among people that relied much on dreams, but he told them; “Except they could distinguish between dream and dream, their observations would be nothing but confusion, since there were three sorts of dreams; for multiplicity of business sometimes caused dreams, and there were whisperings of Satan in the night-season; and there were also speakings of God to man in dreams.” [Because these people were more in want of a clear discerning, than of good will,](#) they at length came out of those imaginations, and at last became fellow believers with him; who though he had great openings [in his understanding,](#) yet great trouble and temptation many times came upon him; so that when it was day he wished for the night, and when it was night he wished for the day. Nevertheless among all those troubles, his [understanding](#) was so opened, that he could say with David, “Day unto day uttereth speech and night

¹⁰ Luke 1:46

unto night sheweth Knowledge”¹¹; for even in these troubles he had great openings of many places in Scripture.

Context

As to state-affairs, things continued in a distracted condition; for the King, who after his army had been beaten, was gone to the Scots; was by them delivered to the English; to whom he could no more prescribe laws, but was fain to receive them. And the Churchmen were also at variance; for the Independents (several of which sat also in Parliament) began to say, that between Episcopacy (against which they had fought conjunctly) and Presbytery, the difference was only the name and some few outward circumstances, since people of a tender conscience might apprehend no less opposition from the Presbyterians than from the Episcopalians; and that this fear was not vain or idle, time afterwards hath shewn abundantly. But let us return to:

Meeting Friendly People

George Fox, at the Beginning of the Year **1647**, feeling some drawings to go into Derbyshire, went thither and meeting with some friendly people, had many discourses with them. Then passing into the Peak Country, he met with more such people, and also with some that were **swayed by** empty and high notions. And travelling into Nottinghamshire, there he met a tender people and among these one Elizabeth Hooton, **of which woman more will be said in sequel**. With these he had some meetings and discourses. But his troubles and temptations still continued and he fasted much, and walked often abroad in solitary places, taking his Bible with him and then sat in hollow trees, and lonesome places till night came on and frequently in the night he walked mournfully about being surrounded with many sorrows in the times of the first working of the Lord in him.

Tender Young Man

¹¹ Psalm 19:2

During all this time he never joined in the profession of religion with any, but gave up himself to the disposing of the Lord, having forsaken not only evil company, but also taken leave of his father and mother, and all other relations; and so he travelled up and down as a stranger on the earth, which way he felt his heart inclined; and when he came into a town, he took a chamber for himself there, and tarried sometimes a month, sometimes more, sometimes less in a place; for he was afraid of staying long in any place, lest being a tender young man, he should be hurt by too familiar a conversation with men.

Leather Clothes

Now though it might not seem very agreeable with the gravity of my work to mention what kind of clothes he wore in these first years of his peregrination; yet I don't count it abuse to say here, that it is indeed true what a certain author viz. Gerrard Croes, relates of him, that he was clothed with leather; but not, as the author adds, because he could not, or would not, forget his former leather-work, but it was partly for simplicity of the dress, and also because such a clothing was strong, and needed but little mending or repairing, which was commodious for him who had no steady dwelling place, and everywhere in his travels he sought to live in a lonely state:-

Heavenly Joy

George Fox keeping himself thus a stranger, he sought heavenly wisdom and endeavoured to get knowledge of the Lord, and to be weaned from outward things, to rely wholly on the Lord alone. Now though his troubles were great, yet they were not so continual, but had some intermissions, and was sometimes brought into such heavenly joy, that admiring the love of God to his soul, he would say with the Psalmist, "Thou, Lord make a fruitful field a barren wilderness, and a barren wilderness a fruitful field."¹²

¹² Psalm 107:33-34

Who Can Speak to His Condition?

Now he regarded the priests but little, because he clearly saw that to be trained at the universities, **and to be instructed in languages, liberal arts and the like sciences**, was not sufficient to make any one a minister of the Gospel, but he looked more after the dissenting people because he sensed a certain tenderness of mind amongst them and their mind usually more open. Yet as he had forsaken the priests so he left the separate preachers also, because he saw there was none among them that could speak to his condition. When all his hopes in them, and in all men were gone, he heard (as his journal tells us) a voice which said, "There is one even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." Having heard this, his heart leapt for joy.

Observation by present Editor: The rest of this section in Sewel contains 630 words and while similar words are contained in Elwood, they are submerged in 3000 words. (Elwood text may be seen in Appendix 9 - old page 8-12. Both Elwood and Sewel follow section with account of woman in Lancashire

Why None Could Speak to His Condition

It was shewed him why there was none other upon earth that could speak to his condition, namely that he might give the Lord all the glory, and that Jesus Christ might have the pre-eminence. Then he, experimentally knowing that Christ enlightens men and gives grace, faith, and power, his desires after the Lord, and his zeal in the pure knowledge of God grew stronger, so he wished to increase therein without the help of any man, book or writing. Yet he was **a diligent** reader of the Holy Scriptures that speak at large of God and Christ, though he knew him not but by revelation, as he who had the key¹³, did open. **Therefore he entered into no fellowship with any society of people, because** he saw nothing but corruptions **everywhere, which made him endeavour to keep fellowship only with Christ**; since in the greatest temptations, when he almost

¹³ Revelations 3:7

despaired, it was shewed him that Christ had been tempted by the same Devil; but that he had overcome him, and bruised his head, and that therefore through the Power, Light, Grace, and Spirit of God he himself might also overcome. Thus the Lord assisted him in the deepest miseries and sorrows, and he found his grace to be sufficient¹⁴: In so much that, though he had yet some desires after the help of men, his thirst was chiefly after the Lord, the Creator of all, and his Son Jesus Christ; because nothing could give him comfort but the Lord by his power; and he clearly saw that all the world¹⁵ though he had possessed a King's State, would not have profited him. **In this condition his understanding came more and more to be opened, so that he saw how death in Adam had passed upon all men; but that by Christ, who tasted death for all men, a deliverance from it and the entrance into God's kingdom might be obtained.**

Overcoming Temptation

Nevertheless, his temptations continued, so that he questioned if he might have sinned against the Holy Ghost. This brought perplexity and trouble over him for many days; yet he still gave himself up to the Lord, and one day, when he had been walking solitary abroad, and was come home, he became exceeding sensible to the love of God to him, so that he could not but admire it. In this condition it was shewed him **that all was to be done in and by Christ**; that he conquers and destroys the tempter, the Devil, and all his works; and that these troubles and temptations were good for him for the trial of his faith. The effect of this was that, though at times his mind was much exercised, yet he was stayed on a secret belief and his soul (by a firm hope) which was to him as an anchor, was kept unhurt in a dissolute world, swimming above the raging waves of temptations. After this (as he relates himself) there did a pure fire appear in him; and he saw

¹⁴ 2 Corinthians 12:9

¹⁵ Mark 8:36

that the appearance of Christ in the heart was as a refiner's¹⁶ fire, and as the fuller's soap; and a spiritual discerning was given to him, by which he saw what it was that veiled his mind, and what it was that did open it. That which could not abide in Patience, he found to be the Flesh that could not give up to the will of God, nor yield up itself to die by the cross, to wit, the power of God. On the other hand, he perceived it was the groans¹⁷ of the Spirit which did open his understanding, and that it was in that Spirit there must be a waiting upon God to obtain redemption.

Lancashire Woman

About this time he heard of a woman in Lancashire that had fasted twenty two days; and he went to see her, but coming there he saw that she was under a temptation: And after he had spoken with her what he felt in his mind, he left her and went to Duckenfield and Manchester, where he stayed a while among the professors he found there, and declared to them **that doctrine which he now firmly believed to be** truth; and some were convinced, so as to receive the **inward divine** teaching of the Lord, and take that for their rule.

This, by what I can find, was the first Beginning of George Fox's preaching, which, I have been credibly informed, in those early years chiefly consisted of some few, but powerful and piercing, words, to those whose hearts were already in some measure prepared in to be capable of receiving this doctrine. It seems to me that these people, and also Elizabeth Hooton (already mentioned) have been the first who by such a mean or weak preaching came to be his fellow believers, though there may also have been some who by the like immediate way, as George Fox himself, have been convinced in their minds, and came to see that they ought diligently to take heed to the teaching of the grace of God that hath appeared to them. Thus it happened that these unexpectedly and unawares came to meet with fellow-believers, which they were not acquainted with before, as will be more circumspectly related hereafter. But to return again to:

¹⁶ Matthew 3:11 Luke 3:16 Revelations 3:18

Perfection

George Fox, set the professors of those times in a rage, that some of their adherents hearkened to his preaching; for they could not endure to hear perfection spoke of, and of a holy and sinless life, [as a state that could be obtained here](#).

Preaching and Reasoning

Not long after he travelled to Broughton in Leicestershire, and went there into a meeting of Baptists, where some people of other notions also came. This gave him occasion to preach the Doctrine of Truth among them, and that not in vain; for since he had great “openings” in the Scriptures, and that a special power of the Lord’s workings began to spring in those parts, several were so reached in their minds, that they came to be convinced, and were turned from darkness to light, partly by his preaching, and partly by reasoning with some.

Temptation - Understanding Source of Hurtful things?

Yet he himself was still sometimes under great temptations, without finding any to open his condition to but the Lord alone, unto whom he cried night and day for help.

Sometimes he went back to Nottinghamshire; and there it pleased the Lord to shew him, that the nature of those things which were hurtful without, were also within the minds of wicked men; and that the natures of dogs, swine, vipers, and those of Cain, Ismael, Esau, Pharaoh etc. were in the hearts of many people. [Since this did grieve him](#), he cried to the Lord, saying, “Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit these evils?” **Inwardly** it was answered him, that it was needful that he should have a sense of all conditions; how else should he speak to all

¹⁷ Romans 8:26

conditions? He also saw there was an ocean of darkness and death; but withal an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness; in all which he perceived the infinite love of God.

Unexpected Food

About this time, it happened that he walking in the town of Mansfield, by the steeple house side, it was **inwardly** told him, 'that which people trample must be thy food'; and at the saying of this, it was opened to him, that it was the Life of Christ people did trample upon; that they fed one another with words, without minding that thereby the blood of the Son of God was trampled underfoot. And it seemed at first strange to him, that he should feed on that which the professors trample upon, yet it was clearly opened to him how this could be.

Spiritual Experience

Then many people came far and near to see him; and though he spoke sometimes to open **religious** matters of faith to them, yet he was fearful to be drawn out by them. Now the reason of people thus flocking to him might proceed partly from this: there was one, Brown, who upon his death bed spoke by way of prophecy many notable things concerning George Fox, and among the rest, that he should be made instrumental by the Lord **to the conversion of people**. And of others that then were something in shew, he said, that they should come to nothing which was fulfilled in time, though this man did not live to see it, for he was not raised from his sickness. After he was buried, George Fox **fell into such a condition, that he not only looked like a dead body, but unto many that came to see him he seemed as if he had been dead really**. Many visited him for about fourteen days' time, who wondered to see him so much altered in countenance, but at length his sorrows and troubles began to wear off, and tears of joy dropped from him, so that he could have wept night and

day with tears of joy in brokenness of heart. And to give an account of George's condition to those who are able to comprehend it, I'll, give his own words: "I saw," saith George," into that which is without End, and Things which cannot be uttered; and of the Greatness and Infiniteness of the Love of God which cannot be expressed in words; For I have been brought through the very Ocean of Darkness and Death, and through and over the Power of Satan, by the glorious Power of Christ; Even through that Darkness was I brought which covered all the World, which chained down all, and shut up all in the Death. And the same eternal Power of God, which brought me through these things was that which afterwards shook the Nation, Priests, Professors and People." Then I (George) could say, "I had been in Spiritual Babylon, Sodom, Egypt, and the grave; but by the eternal Power of God I was come out of it, and was brought over it, and the power of it, into the Power of Christ. And I saw the Harvest white, and the Seed of God lying thick on the ground, as ever did the wheat, that was sown outwardly, and none to gather it. And for this I mourned with tears".

Thus far, George Fox's own words, of whom now a report went abroad, that he was a young man that had a discerning Spirit: Whereupon many professors, priests and people came to him and his ministry increased; for he, having received great openings, spoke to them of the things of God, and was heard with attention by many, who going away, spread the fame thereof.

Then came the tempter, and set upon him again, charging him that he had sinned against the Holy Ghost; but he could not tell in what; and then Paul's condition came before him, how after he had been taken up into the third Heaven, and seen things not lawful to be uttered, a messenger of

Satan was sent to buffet him¹⁸, **that he might not exalt himself**. Thus George Fox by the assistance of the Lord, got also over that temptation.

Political Situation

Now the 47th year of the Century drew to an end; and the State-Affairs in England grew more and more clouded and intricate; for the King, not thinking himself any longer safe in Hampton-Court, whither he had been brought from the army, he withdrew to the Isle of Wight, whilst the Parliament still insisted on the Abrogation of Episcopacy¹⁹, and would be master of the Military Forces; which the King not being willing to yield to, was kept in closer custody, and no more regarded as a sovereign, to whom obedience was due from the Parliament.

*Under these intestine²⁰ troubles the minds of many people came to be fitted to receive a nearer way and doctrine of godliness; and it was in the year **1648**, that several persons seeking the Lord were become fellow believers, and entered into society with George Fox; insomuch that they began to have great meetings in Nottinghamshire, which were visited by many.*

Outward or Inward Law.

About that time there was a meeting of priests and professors at a justice's house and George Fox went among them and heard them discourse about what the apostle Paul said, that he had not known sin but by the Law, which said; thou shalt not lust. And since they held that to be spoken of the outward Law, George Fox told them, "Paul spoke that after he was convinced; for he had the outward Law before, and was bred up in it, when he was in the lust of persecution; but it was the Law of God in his mind²¹, which he served and which the law in his members warred against". **This saying found so much entrance**, that those of the priests and professors that were **most moderate** yielded, and consented, that it

¹⁸ 2 Corinthians 12:7

¹⁹ Westminster Confession passed 25 November 1647 and completed with Scripture Citation 14 April 1648

²⁰ Dictionary obsolete meaning domestic not foreign

²¹ Context Romans 7:7 to 8:1-11, especially 7:21 One translation translates 'mind' as 'conscience'

was not the outward Law, but the **Inward**, that showed the **inward** lust, which the Apostle spoke of.

Pentecost

After this he went again to Mansfield, where was a great meeting of professors and other people; and being among them, and moved to pray, **such an extraordinary power appeared, and seized on the hearts of some in so eminent a manner**, that the house seemed to be shaken. And after prayer, some of the Auditory began to say, that this resembled the Days of the Apostles, when on the Day of **Pentecost**, the house where they met was shaken.

Outward or Inward?

Not long after this there was another great meeting of professors where George Fox came also; and hearing them discourse about the blood of Christ, he cried out among them: “Do you not see the blood of Christ? Ye must see it in your hearts, to sprinkle your hearts and consciences from dead works to serve the living God”. This was a doctrine which shattered these professors who would have the blood only without them, **not thinking that it was to be felt inwardly**. But a certain captain, whose name was Amos Stoddard, was so reached, that seeing how they endeavoured to bear George Fox down with many words, he said, “Let the youth speak; hear the youth speak”, **and coming afterward to be more acquainted with George Fox, he had further opportunity to be instructed in the way of godliness, of which he came to be a faithful follower**.

Sometime after George Fox returned to Leicestershire, his own county, where several tender people came to be convinced by his preaching. On passing thence to Warwickshire, he met with a great company of professors, who came together in a field, and were praying and expounding the Scriptures. Here the Bible was given him, which he

opened the 5th of Matthew, where Christ expounded some parts of the Law; from whence George Fox took occasion to open to them the **inward** and outward state of man: That which he held forth, getting some ground, they fell into a fierce contention among themselves, and so parted.

A Woman's Question

Then he heard of a great Meeting to be at Leicester for a dispute wherein those of several persuasions, as Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists and Episcopalians were said to be concerned. The meeting being appointed to be in the Steeple-House he went thither, where abundance of people was met, some of those who spoke being in pews, and the priest in the pulpit. At last after several reasoning's, a woman started a question, and asked, "What that birth was the Apostle Peter spoke of viz. a being born again of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, that liveth and abideth for ever?" The Priest, instead of answering this question, said to her, "I permit not a woman to speak in the Church," (though he had given liberty for any to speak). This kindled George Fox's zeal so that he stepped up and asked the priest, "Doest thou call this place (the Steeple-house) a church? Or dost thou call this mixed multitude a Church?" But the priest not answering this, asked what a church was. And George Fox told him that the church was the pillar and ground of Truth, made up of living stones; living members; a spiritual household, which Christ was head of, but He was not head of a mixed multitude, or an old house made of lime stone and wood. This caused such a stir that the priest came down out of his pulpit, and others out of their pews, whereby the dispute was marred. But George Fox went to a great inn, and there disputed with the priests and Professors of all sorts, maintaining what he had said, till they all went away. Several were convinced that day, and among these, the woman who asked the question aforesaid.

All Things Come by Nature?

After this George Fox returned into Nottinghamshire, and went into the Vale of Beaver, where he preached repentance to the people: He staying some weeks there, and passing through several towns, many were convinced of the truth of his doctrine. About that time he was sitting by the fire one morning, a cloud came over him, and a temptation beset him; and he sitting still, it was suggested, "All things come by nature," and he was in a manner quite clouded; but continued to sit still - the people of the house perceiving nothing. At length a living hope arose in him, and also a voice, that said, "There is a living God, who made all things"; and immediately the cloud and temptation vanished away, whereby his heart was made glad, and he praised the Lord.

Not long after this he met with some people that had a [mischievous](#) notion, that there was no God, but that all things came by nature. He reasoned with them, so confounded them, that some were fain to confess that there was a living God. Then he saw it was good for him to have been tried under such a cloud.

Start of Others Preaching

Now in those parts he had great meetings; and a divine power working in that country, and thereabouts many were gathered. ²²Then coming into Derbyshire, there was a great meeting of his friends at Eton, where many of them [began](#) to preach the doctrine of truth, who afterwards moved to declare the truth in other places also.

Stand Against Oppressive Wages

George Fox coming about this time to Mansfield, heard [that in a town about eight miles off](#), there was a sitting of justices, to deliberate about the hiring of servants. He went there [feeling a constraint upon his mind](#), and exhorted them, not to oppress the servants in their wages, but to do

²²[Nottinghamshire](#)

that which was right and just for them. The Servants, many of which were come there, he admonished to do their duty, and serve honestly. They all received his exhortation kindly. He felt himself also moved to go to several courts and steeple-houses at Mansfield, and other places, warning them to leave off oppression, deceit and other evils.

Having heard in Mansfield of one in the country who was a common drunkard, and a noted whore-master, and a poet also, he went to him and reproved him in an awful manner for his evil courses; which so struck him, that coming afterwards to George Fox he told him, that he was so smitten when he spoke to him, that he had scarce any strength left in him. And this man was so **thoroughly** convinced that he turned from his wickedness, and became an honest sober man, to the astonishment of those that knew him before.

Thus the work of George Fox's ministry went forward, and many were thereby turned from darkness to light; and divers meetings of his friends, who were much increased in number since the year 1646, were set up in several places.

Practice Physick – Fox Questions?

Now George Fox was come up to quite another state than formerly he had lived in; for he knew now not only a renewing of the heart, and a restoration of the mind, but the virtues of the creatures were also opened to him; so he began to deliberate whether he should practice Physick for the good of mankind. But God had another service for him, and it was showed him that he was to enter into a spiritual labour; and also that those who continued faithful to the Lord, might attain a state in which the sinful inclination was subdued. Moreover the three great professions of the World, viz, Physick, Divinity, (so called) and Law, were opened to him, whereby he saw that the physicians wanted the wisdom of God, by which

the creatures were made, knew not their virtues; that the Lawyers generally were void of equity and justice, and so out of the Law of God, which went over the first transgression, and over all sin, and answered the Spirit of God that was **oppressed** in man. The priests, for the most part, were out of the true faith **which Christ is the author of, and which purifies the heart, and brings men to have access to God.** So these Physicians Lawyers and Priests, who pretended to cure the body, to establish the knowledge and wisdom they ought to possess. Yet he felt there was a Divine Power, by which all might be reformed, if they would receive and bow to it.

Greatest Deceivers

He saw also, that though the priests did err, yet they were not the greatest deceivers spoken of in the Scriptures; but that these great deceivers were such, who as Cain, had heard the voice of God, and who as Corah, Datham, **and Abiram**, and their company, were come out of Egypt, and through the Red Sea, and had praised God on the banks of the sea shore; and who being come as far as Balaam, could speak the word of the Lord, as having heard His voice, and known his Spirit, so that they could see the Star of Jacob, and the Goodliness of Israel's tents, which no enchantment could prevail against. These that could speak so much from their divine experience, and yet turned from the Spirit of God into gainsaying²³ - these he saw would be great deceivers, far beyond the priests. He saw also that people generally read the scriptures, without having a true sense of them; for some cried out much against Cain, Ismael, Esau, Corah, Balaam, Judas, etc. not regarding that the nature of these was yet alive in themselves; whereby they always applied to others that nature in which they themselves lived.

Everyone Enlightened

The Lord also opened to him now, that everyman was enlightened by the divine Light of Christ; and he saw that they that believed in it, came out of condemnation, and became the Children of the Light, but they that hated it, and did not believe in it, were condemned by it, though they made profession of Christ. *'All this was clearly opened to his mind, without him knowing then hat he had read this in the Holy Scriptures, although upon closer reading he later discovered that this really was written there.* He saw also that God had afforded a measure of his Spirit to all men, and that thereby they could truly come to serve the Lord, and to worship Him; and that his grace, which brings salvation, had appeared to all men and was able to bring them into the favour of God.

Name in Book of Life

And on a certain time, as he was walking in the fields, he understood it was said to him: "Thy name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, which was before the foundation of the world." This he took to be the voice of the Lord and believed it to be true. Then he felt himself powerfully moved to go into the world, which was like a briary, thorny wilderness; and he found that the world swelled against him, and made a noise like the great raging waves of the sea.

Message

Now he was sent to turn people from darkness to the light, that they might receive Christ Jesus; for he saw that as many as should receive him in his Light, he would give power to become the sons of God. Therefore, he was to turn people to the grace of God, and to the truth in the heart; and that by this grace they might be taught, and thereby obtain salvation; since Christ had died for all men, and was a propitiation for all - having enlightened everyman with his divine and saving light, and the

²³ Dictionary opposing, saying against.

manifestation of the Spirit of God being given to every man to profit withal. He now, being sent to preach the everlasting gospel, did it with gladness, and endeavoured to bring people off from their own ways to Christ the new and living way; and from their churches, which men had gathered, to the church in God, the general assembly written in Heaven, which Christ is the head of; and from the world's teachers, made by men, to learn of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and of whom the Father said, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him; and off from the world's worship, to the Spirit of God in the **inward** Parts, that they might worship the Father, who seeks such to worship him.

No Hat Honour...Equality

Now he also found that the Lord forbad him to put off his hat to any man, high or Low; **but to reserve that homage to God alone**; and he was required to 'thou' and 'thee' every man and woman, without distinction, and not to bid people good morrow, or good evening; neither might he bow, or scrape with his Leg to anyone. **This was such an unusual thing with people**, that it made many of all persuasions and professions rage against him; but by the assistance of the Lord he was carried over all, and many came to be his fellow-believers, and turned to God, in a little time; although it is almost unspeakable what rage and fury arose; what blows, pinchings, beatings, and imprisonments they underwent, besides the danger they were sometimes in of losing their lives for these matters. So indiscrete is man in his natural state. For him it did not avail to say, that the hat-honour was an honour from below, which the Lord would lay in the dust and stain it; that it was an honour which the proud looked for, without seeking the honour that came from God alone; that it was an honour invented by men in the Fall, who therefore were offended if it was not given to them; though they would be looked upon as church-members and good Christians. Christ himself said, "How can you believe, who

receive honour of one another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" That was an honour, which in relation to the outward ceremony, viz. the putting off of the hat, was the same which was given to God; so that in the outward sign of reverence, no distinction or difference was made between the creator and the creature. Nay, that the saying of 'you' to a single person went yet a degree further; for not only king's and princes formally among the heathens and Jews had not been offended at it when they were 'thee'd' and 'thou'd', but experience shewed that it was still the language wherewith God was daily spoken to - both in religious assemblies and without." All these reasons found little entrance with priests, magistrates, and others. Bitter revelling's, ill usage, and shameful abuses, were now become the lot and share of those who, for conscience sake, could no longer follow the ordinary custom. For though it pretended that the putting off of the hat was but a small thing; **which none ought to scruple**; yet it was a wonderful thing to see what great a disturbance this pretended small matter caused among the people of all sorts; so that even such that would be looked upon as those who practiced humility and meekness, soon shewed what spirit²⁴ they were of, when this worldly honour was denied them. **But all this served to strengthen the fellow-believers more and more in their plain carriage, and made them live up faithful to the conviction of their conscience, without respect of persons.**

King Sentenced to Death

In the mean, while the troubles in the land continued, we have left the King in the foregoing year in the Isle of Wight, in effect un-kinged. Sometime after this, the Duke of York, being then passed fourteen years of age and the second son of the King was fled to Holland, disguised in woman's apparel; and his eldest brother the Prince of Wales, who two years before was fled to France, now came to Helvoot-Sluice in

²⁴ George Fox had a realization that the spirit in some people was not the Holy Spirit. See also about the nature of some people on page 24

Holland, and went from thence with some English Men of War, whose commanders were for the King, to the Downs in England, with intention to take the ships coming from London. He also published, by the spreading of a Declaration that he came to release his father. Now there was also a negotiation on foot between the King and the Parliament, and there seemed some hopes of an accommodation, had not the army, the chiefest instrument of breaking down Royal power, opposed it, by calling for justice against all those who had wronged the country, none excepted. This broke off the Treaty. Several suspected members were turned out of the Parliament, and the King was carried to Windsor about the time of Christmas; and it was resolved henceforth to send no more deputations to him, or receive any from him; who was now no more named King but only Charles Stuart - A very strange turn of mundane affairs, and a mighty evidence of the fluctuating inconsistency thereof. But things made no stand here, for it was concluded to bring him to a trial; and the Parliament appointed General Fairfax, and Oliver Cromwell, Lieutenant General, with more than 100 other persons, to be his Judges. These being formed into a court of justice, the King was conducted from Windsor to St James', and from thence brought before them in Westminster-Hall, where he was arraigned as guilty of high treason, for having levied war against the Parliament and people of England. But he, not owning the court to be lawful, nor acknowledging their authority, said, "I am not intrusted by the people, they are mine by inheritance". And being unwilling to answer the charge, he was on the 27th of the Month called January sentenced to death, as a tyrant, traitor, murderer and a publick enemy to the Commonwealth. Before the sentence was pronounced, the King desired that he might be permitted to make a proposition to both houses of Parliament in the painted chamber, designing as was since said, to propose his own resignation, and the admission of his son, the Prince of Wales, to the throne. This request was denied by the Court. Now though the said Prince, considering his father's danger, had applied himself to the Stated General of the United Provinces of the Hague for assistance; and that these sent two ambassadors to the Parliament, who coming to London on the same day the fatal sentence of death was pronounced, could not obtain admission till next day to the speakers of both Houses, and were afterwards with Fairfax and Cromwell, and other commanders; and one of them also had audience in the Parliament to intercede with them for the king's life; yet all proved in vain. On the 30th of the aforesaid month, the King was brought on a scaffold erected before the banqueting-house and his head

severed from his body. The same day the Parliament ordered a Declaration to be published, whereby it was declared treason to endeavour to promote the Prince of Wales, Charles Stuart, to be King of England, or any other single person to be the chief governor thereof. Having abolished the House of Peers, they assumed to themselves the chief government of the nation, with the title of The Parliament of the Commonwealth of England.

No sooner had the news of the King's death come into Scotland but Charles, Prince of Wales, was proclaimed in Edinburgh King of Great Britain, provided he should, before assuming the royal authority, give satisfaction in some matters, concerning religion. Though this displeased the English, yet the Scottish asserted that they might as well do so, as the English, who had done the same at the death of the Late King's, Father in the year 1625. Leaving the State-Affairs, let's return to:

Exposure of Sins and Imprisoned for the First Time.

In the year 1649, George Fox was much exercised to declare openly against all sorts of sins; and therefore he went not only to the courts, crying for justice, and exhorting the judges and justices to do justice, but he warned also those that kept public-houses for entertainment, not to let people have more drink, than would do them good. He also testified against wakes, May-games, plays, and shows, by which people were led into vanity, and drawn off from the fear of God - the days that were set forth as **holy-days**, being the usual times wherein God was most dishonoured. When he came to markets, he also declared against deceitful merchandising, and warned to deal justly, and to speak the truth, and he testified against the mountebanks²⁵ playing tricks on their stages. When occasion offered, he warned the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses to teach their children to mind the fear of the Lord; **saying they ought themselves to be examples and patterns of virtue.** Very burdensome it was to him when he heard the bell ring to call people together to the steeple house; for it seemed to him just like market-bell,

²⁵ Dictionary a quack who harangues and plat the fool, a charlatan.

to gather the people that the priest might set forth his ware to sell. Going once on the first day of the week, in the morning, with some of his friends in Nottingham to have a meeting there; and having seen from the top of a hill the great steeple-house of the town, he felt it required of him to cry against that idol-temple and the worshipers therein. He said nothing of this to those who were with him, but went on with them to the meeting, where after some stay, he left them and went away to the steeple-house, where the priest took for his text these words of the apostle Peter, “We have a most sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts”. The priest told the people this was the scripture by which they were to try all doctrines, religion, and opinions. Hearing this, George Fox felt such a mighty power and Godly zeal working in him that he was made to cry out, “O, no, it is not the scriptures, but the Holy Spirit, by which the holy men of God gave forth the scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgements are to be tried. **That was** it (the Holy Spirit²⁶) **that** lead into all truth²⁷, and gave knowledge **thereof**. For the Jews had the scriptures²⁸, and yet resisted the Holy Ghost, and rejected Christ, the bright Morning-Star, and persecuted him and His apostles; though they took upon them to try their doctrine by the scriptures; but they erred in judgement, and did not try them **aright**, because they **did it** without the Holy Ghost.” He thus speaking, the officers came and took him away, and put him into a nasty stinking prison. At night he was brought before the mayor, aldermen and sheriffs of the town; they examining him, he told them, that the Lord had moved him to come **there into the steeple-house**: And though the Mayor at first appeared peevish and fretful, yet he was allayed. However, after some discourse, George Fox was sent back to prison. Sometime after, the head

²⁶ The Editors understanding of the word “it” in this context

²⁷ John 16:13

²⁸ John 5:39-40

sheriff, John Reckless sent for him to his house; and when George Fox came in, the Sheriff's wife met him in the hall and said, "Salvation is come into our house". His speech in the steeple-house had so amazed many, that they could not get the sound of it out of their ears; and not only this woman was wrought upon, but also her husband, children, and servants were much changed by the power of the Lord.

George Fox thus coming to lodge at this sheriff's house, had great meetings there, [and some persons of quality in the world came to them; and they were reached very eminently in their minds by an invisible power.](#) John Reckless being of that number, sent for the other sheriff, and for a women they traded with; and he told her in the presence of the other sheriff, that they had wronged her in their dealings with her, and that therefore they ought to make her restitution; to which John Reckless exhorted the other sheriff, being himself made sensible that this was an indispensable duty.

A mighty change was now wrought in him (Reckless), and his understanding came to be opened so that on the next market day, as he was walking with George Fox in the chamber, in his slippers, he said; "I must go into the market and preach repentance to the people." Accordingly, he went in his slippers into the market, and into several streets preaching repentance. Some others also in the town were moved to speak to the mayor and magistrates, and to the people, exhorting them to repent, but this the magistrates could not endure; [and to vent their passion](#) on George Fox they sent for him to the sheriff's house and committed him to the common prison, where he was kept till the assizes came on. Then he was to have been brought before the judge, but the Sheriff's man being somewhat long in fetching him, the judge was risen before George Fox came to the session-house. However, the judge was [a little displeased](#), having said, he would have admonished the youth

(Meaning George Fox) if it had been brought before him. So he was carried back to prison. In the meanwhile, such a wonderful power broke forth among Friends, that many were astonished at it, so that even several of the priests were made tender, and some did confess to the power of the Lord. Now though the people began to be very rude, yet the governor of the castle **was so moderate**, that he sent down the soldiers to disperse them. George Fox having been kept a prisoner a **pretty long time**, was at length set at liberty, and then travelled as before in the work of the Lord.

Distracted Woman

Coming to Mansfield-Woodhouse, he found a distracted woman under a doctor's hand, being bound, and with her hair loose. The doctor, being about to let her blood could get no blood from her, which made George Fox desire to unbind her; and after this was done, he spoke to her in the Name of the Lord, to be quiet and still. **This proved of such effect** that she became still and her mind coming to be settled, she mended and afterwards **received the doctrine** of truth, and continued in it unto her death.

Cruelly Beaten

While George Fox was in this place, he was moved to go into the steeple house, and declared there the truth to the priest and the people; which doing, the people fell upon him, and struck him down, almost smothering him, for he was cruelly beaten and bruised with their hands, bibles and sticks. Then they hauled him out who was hardly able to stand, and put him into the stocks, where he sat some hours. They having brought horse-whips, threatened to whip him. After some time they had him before the magistrates, at a knight's house; who, seeing how ill he had been used, set him at liberty, after much threatening. The rude multitude

stoned him out of the town; and though he was scarce able to go, yet with much ado he got about a mile from the town, where he met some people who gave him something to comfort him because he was **inwardly** bruised. But it pleased the Lord soon to heal him again; and some people were that day convinced of the truth, **which had been declared by him in the steeple house**, at which he rejoiced.

Encounter with Baptists

Now he went out of Nottinghamshire into Leicestershire, accompanied by several of his friends; and coming to Barrow he discussed with some Baptists; and one of them saying, "What was not of faith, was sin." He asked what faith was - how it was wrought in man, but they turned off from that, spoke of their water baptism; which gave occasion for George Fox and his friends to ask, "Who baptised John the Baptist, and who baptised Peter, John, and the rest of the Apostles?" But they were silent at those questions. After some other discourse they parted.

People Who Claimed They Were Gods

On the next first day of the week, George Fox and those with him came to Bagworth, and went to the steeple house; and after the priest had done, they had some service there by speaking to the people. Then passing from thence, he heard of people that were in prison in Coventry for religion; and as he was walking towards the gaol, the word of the Lord (as he relates) came to him saying, "My Love is always to thee, and thou art in my Love." **By this he was overcome with a** sense of the love of God, and much strengthened in his **inward** man. But coming to the Gaol, a great power of darkness struck at him; **for instead of meeting such as were imprisoned for religion, he found them to be blasphemers**, who had come to that degree that they said, they were gods; and this, their wicked opinion, they endeavoured to maintain by scripture, misapplying what

was said to the apostle Peter, when the sheet was let down to him, viz. “What was sanctified, he should not call common or unclean”, and the words of the apostle Paul, concerning God’s “reconciling all things to himself, things in Heaven and things on earth”. George Fox was greatly grieved at this profaneness, and told them that these scriptures were nothing to their purpose. Seeing they said, they were God, he asked them if they knew whether it would rain tomorrow and they saying, they could not tell. He told them God could tell. He asked them also, if they thought they should be always in that condition or should change? And they answering, that they could not tell. George Fox told them, that God could tell it, and that He (God) did not change. This confounded them, and brought them down for that time; so after having reproved them for their blasphemous expressions he went away. Not long after this, one of these Ranters, whose name was Joseph Salmon, gave forth a book of recantation, upon which they were set at Liberty. From Coventry, George Fox went to Atherstone, where, going into the chapel, he declared to priests and people, “God is come to teach his people himself, and to bring them off from man-made-teachers, to hear his Son.” **Though some few raged, yet they were generally pretty quiet**, and some were convinced.

Nathaniel Stevens

After this service, he went to Market-Bosworth, and coming into the public place of worship he found Nathaniel Stevens, preaching, who, as hath been said already, was priest of the town where George Fox was born. Here George Fox had occasion to speak. Stevens told the people he was mad, and they should not hear him; though he had said before to one Colonel Purefoy concerning him, that “there never was such a plant bred in England”. The people now being stirred up by this priest, fell upon George Fox and his friends, and stoned them out of the town.

Nevertheless, this wrought in the minds of some others, so that they were made loving.

Healing and Naked Rapier

Now travelling on, George Fox came to Two-Cross where he spoke to the excise-men, and warned them to take heed of oppressing the poor. There being in that town a great man that had long lain sick, and was given over by the physicians, he went to visit him in his chamber; and having spoken some words to him, he was moved to pray by his bedside. The Lord was entreated so that the sick man was restored to health. George Fox being come down, and speaking to some that were in a room there, a servant came with a naked rapier in his hand, **and threatened to stab him**; but he looking steadfastly on this man, said, "Alack for thee, poor creature! What wilt thou do with thy carnal weapon? It is no more to me than a straw." **This servant being stopped thus**, went away in a rage and his master hearing of it, turned him out of his service. Afterwards he was very loving to Friends; and when George Fox came to town, both he and his wife came to see him.

Changed by Getting Parsonage

After this he went into Derbyshire, where his fellow believers increased in godly strength. Coming to Chesterfield, he found one Britland to be priest there who had been partly convinced of the doctrine of truth; had spoken much on behalf of it, and saw beyond the common sort of priests.

But when the priest of that town died, he got the parsonage. George Fox now speaking to him and his people, endeavoured to bring them off from man's teaching, unto God's teaching, and thought the priest was not able to gainsay²⁹, yet they had him before the mayor, and threatened to send

²⁹ Dictionary contradict, deny, dispute.

him to the house of correction, but when it was late in the night, the officers and the watchmen led him out of the town.

Concerning State Affairs it hath been said already, that Charles 2nd had been proclaimed King by the Scots; but being still in Holland, they sent to him there, that he would subscribe the Covenant, and so abrogate Episcopacy in Scotland: It was also desired that he would put some Lords from him, But those that were sent, received only an answer from the young King in general terms, which made them return home again where we leave them, to see in the meanwhile how it went with:

The Bell Rung Trial in Derby

George Fox having been sent away, as hath been said, from Chesterfield, came to Derby in the year 1650, and lay at a doctor's house, whose wife, was convinced of the truth he preached. Now it happened as he was walking there in his chamber, that the bell rung; and he hearing it, asked the woman of the house what the bell rung for? She told him there was to be a lecture there that day; so that many of the officers of the army, and priests and preachers were to be there, also a colonel that was a preacher. Then he felt himself moved to go to that congregation: and when the service was done, he spoke to them what he believed the Lord required of him; and they were pretty quiet. But there came an officer, who took him by the hand, and said, that he, and the other two that were with him, must go before the magistrates. He then coming about the first hour of the afternoon before them, they asked him, Why he came thither? To which having answered, *"That God had moved him to it;"* he further said, *"that God did not dwell in Temples made with hands; and that all their Preaching, Baptism, and Sacrifices would never sanctify them; but that they ought to look unto Christ in them, and not unto men; because it is Christ that Sanctifies."* They then running into many words, he told them, *"They were not to dispute of God and Christ, but to obey him."* But this Doctrine did so displease them that they often put him in and out of the room, and sometimes told him scoffingly, that 'he was taken up in the raptures'. At last they asked him, whether he was sanctified and he answering *"Yes."* They then asked, If he had no sin? To which he said, *"Christ my Saviour has taken away my Sin, and in him there is no sin"* Then he and Friends were asked how they knew that Christ did abide in them? And George Fox said, *by his Spirit, that he has given us.* Then they temptingly asked if any of them was Christ? But he answered, *"Nay, we are nothing, Christ is all"*. At length they also asked, if a man steals, is it a sin? To which he answered with the words of Scripture, *"All*

Unrighteousness is Sin". When they had wearied themselves in examining him, they committed him and another man, to the house of correction in Derby for six months as blasphemers as appears by the following Mittimus.

"To the master of the house of correction in Darby, Greeting.

We have sent you here withal the bodies of George Fox late of Mansfield in the county of Nottingham, and John Fretwell, late of Staniesby in the County of Darby - husbandman, brought before us this present day, and charged with avowed uttering, and broaching of divers blasphemous opinions, contrary to a late Act of Parliament³⁰, which upon examination before us have confessed. These are therefore to require you, forthwith upon sight hereof, to receive them - the said George Fox and John Fretwell into thy custody, and them safely to keep during the space of six months, without bail or mainprise, or until they shall find sufficient security to be of good behaviour, or thence delivered by order from ourselves. Hereof you are not to fail. Given under our hands and seals this 30th Day of October 1650....." Ger Bennett. Nathan Barton

George Fox being thus, as hath been said, locked up, the priests bestirred themselves in their pulpits to preach up sin for term of life; and they endeavoured to persuade people that it was erroneous doctrine, to assert the possibility of being freed from sin in this life, as was held forth by the Quakers; for this began now to be the name whereby George Fox's fellow believers were called in a reviling way: and since that denomination hath continued to them from that time downward, we cannot therefore pass by the first rise of it in silence. Until this time those who professed the light of Christ as shining in man's heart, and reprovng for sin, were not improperly called professors of the light, or children of the light; but Gervas Bennet, one of the justices of the peace who signed the aforesaid Mittimus, and an independent -

³⁰? Was this referring to the **Westminster Confession of Faith that was presented to the Long Parliament 25 November 1647 and Scripture Citations were added on 14 April 1648. Shorter Catechism** is a [catechism](#) written in 1646 and 1647 by the [Westminster Assembly](#), a [synod](#) of English and Scottish theologians and laymen intended to bring the [Church of England](#) into greater conformity with the [Church of Scotland](#).

hearing that George Fox bade him, and those about him tremble at the word of the Lord; took this weighty saying with such an airy mind, that from thence he took occasion to call him (Fox) and his friends scornfully QUAKERS. This unusual denomination was taken up eagerly, and spread so among people, that not only the priests there from that time gave no other name to the professors of the light, but sounded it so gladly abroad, that it soon ran all over England; and making no stand there; it quickly reached neighbouring countries, and adjacent kingdoms, insomuch that the said professors of the light, (for distinction's sake from other religious societies), have been called everywhere by that English name, which, sounding very odd in the ears of some foreign nations, hath also given occasion to many silly stories.

Now because in those early times among the many adherents of this persuasion, were also some that, having been people of rude and dissolute life, came to be pricked to the heart, that they grew true penitents, with real sorrow for their former transgressions. It happened that not only they at meetings did burst out into tears, but also were affected with such a singular commotion of the mind, that some shakings of their bodies was perceived - some people naturally being more affected with passions of the mind, than others. Even anger doth transport some men so violently that it makes them tremble; whereas others will quake with fear. What wonder then, if some, being struck with the terrors of God did tremble? This being seen by envious men, they took occasion from thence to tell, that these professors of the light performed their worship with shaking; yet they themselves never asserted that trembling of the body was an essential part of their religion, but have occasionally said to the contrary; though they did not deny themselves to be such as trembled before God; and they also did not stick to say, that all people ought to do so; however thereby not enjoining a bodily shaking.

We have seen now how one Fretwell was committed with George Fox to the house of correction; but he, not standing faithful to his testimony, obtained by intercession with the jailor, leave of the justice to go see his mother and so got his liberty; and then a report was spread, that George Fox had bewitched and deceived him.

Object of Hatred

George Fox was now become the object of many people's hatred. Magistrates, priests, and professors were all in a rage against him; and the jailer, to something wherewithal to ensnare him, would sometime ask him silly questions, as whether the door was latched or not - thinking thereby to draw some sudden unadvised answer from him whereby he might charge sin upon him, but he was kept so watchful and circumspect, that they could never get advantage of him.

Now since Ger Croese in the beginning of his history represents George Fox as one altogether unfit, not only to write legibly, but also to express his mind clearly in writing, and that therefore he was always obliged to employ others that could set down the meaning intelligently. It won't be beside the purpose to say, that this, more than ever will be able to prove. For though it can't be denied, that he was no elegant writer or good speller, yet it is true, that his characters being tolerable, his writing was legible, and the matter treated was intelligible though his style not like that of a skilful linguist. And albeit he employed others, because himself was not a quick writer, yet generally they were young lads, who as they durst not have attempted to alter his words and phrases, so they would not have been skilful enough to refine his style. I don't write this from hear-say but I have seen it at sundry times. And how true it is what the same author said, that mostly all that George Fox did write, was scarce of anything besides a rough collection of several Scripture³¹ places, may be seen by the sequel of this History, wherein may be found many of his writings. The first of his letters I met with is the following which he wrote to the priests of Darby, from the house of correction, where certainly he had not the convenience of a writing clerk.

³¹ From Fox's frequent use elsewhere of the phrase "Turned the grace of God into Wantonness" which comes from Jude 4 in translations like Wycliff Tyndale and Coverdale of the Bible that were earlier than the King James Authorized Bible I feel that it was probably the English of Coverdale Bible, that George Fox was most familiar with.

1. Pet. 2. 2 *to the sayntes. * For there are certayne craftely crept in, of which it was wrytten afore tyme vnto soche iudgement. They are ungodly, and turne the grace of oure God vnto wantānes, and denye God the onely LORDE, and oure LORDE Jesus Christ.*

Present Editor's Note

From just before the above historical context input, Sewel's text went nearly word for word (see photo copy of text Appendix 2) with Elwood's version of George Fox's Journal. The fact that William Sewel said in his introduction, that the greater part of George Fox's Life and Transactions were taken from his Journal does not mean that the account of his early years was not from the document he received - the document that, as William Sewel said, was written on George Foxes Instruction.

After George Fox's arrival in Derbyshire - the account at the start of the Penney Text there are about 1000 words when Sewel, Penney and Elwood are all available, before Sewel's words become identical with Elwood.

During this time Elwood is closer to Penney than Sewel. (Maybe Sewel translated the document he got from George Fox into low Dutch and back to English).

Not long after George's commitment to Gaol, the Elwood text says that he was moved to write both to the priests and magistrates of Darby.

Subsequent to this, the Sewel text virtually quotes Elwood word for word so is not repeated here, but the Penney Text follows in Chapter 2 until George Fox's release from

Gaol.

George Fox Biography 1650-51 - Based on Manuscript (Penney's 1911 Edition)

Gaol in Derby

Several times George Fox had motions from the Lord to go into the town at times of fairs and markets to speak to the people, although he was in Prison. He would tell the keeper of the prison and ask him to let him go, but he was not allowed. Then George Fox said to the jailor, "Then let it be on thee - the iniquity of the people, and the Lord said to me (Fox), that I was not to get out yet, but was set as a king for the bodies sake, and for

the true hope, that purifies, and the true faith that gives victory: and the true belief that overcomes the world”.

Discourses in Prison - Pleading for Sin and Imperfection

George Fox got the feeling that the professors coming for discourse with him were coming to dispute and plead for sin and imperfection, and George Fox asked them whether they believed and they said ‘yes’. Then George Fox asked them; ‘in whom’ and they said, ‘In Christ’, and George Fox said to them: “If you believe, you are passed from death to life, and therefore from the sin that bringeth death...” {They said they believed no such thing - that any could be free from sin while on earth}. Then George Fox bid them keep from babbling about the Scriptures, which were holy men’s words, whilst pleading for un-holiness. Then (it may be) another company of professors would come and they would also be pleading for sin, and George Fox would ask them whether they had hope and they would say, ‘Yes, God forbid else, but that we should have hope.’ George asked them, ‘What hope is it? Did it purify you as he is pure? Christ in you the hope of Glory?’ And they could not endure to hear of purity {Or being made pure here} and then George Fox bid them keep from talking of ‘ye Scriptures - ye holy men’s words {for ye holy men pleaded for holiness in heart & life & conversation here} & you pleading for impurity & sin which is of ye Devil {what have you to do with holy men’s words}? ‘

And then it may be another company would come that would be talking of the Scriptures and pleading for sin, and George Fox would ask them, ‘Have you any faith?’ They would say, ‘Yes’, and that ‘they were Christians’. George Fox would ask, ‘What faith is it? Will it give victory over sin and over the Devil and purify your hearts and bring you to have access to God again and to please God, which faith is held with a pure conscience?’ And they could not endure to hear talk of purity nor victory over sin & the Devil {here upon the earth}. Then George Fox bid them

give over talking and babbling of 'ye Scriptures that were given forth by holy men, as they were moved by ye Holy Ghost'.

Gaoler and His Wife

The Keeper being a great professor was in a mighty rage against him, yet it pleased the Lord to strike him so one day that as George Fox was walking in his chamber he heard a doleful noise and he stood, and the keeper was speaking to his wife how that he saw the Day of Judgement and he saw George there and he was afraid of George because he had done him so much wrong. He had spoken so much against him to the professors and justices {and the Priests}; in taverns and alehouses, etc. Towards evening he came up to George's chamber and the Keeper said to George, "I have been like a lion against you, but now I come like a Lamb" - come like the gaoler that came to Paul and Silas trembling. George told him that he was in his power; that he might do what he would. The Keeper said 'nay, he would have me leave.' He could {desire to} be always with George, but not {to have George} as a prisoner. So George permitted him, and the keeper told George all his heart and believed all that George said to be true and of the true faith, and hope etc. He wondered that the other man who was put in prison with George did not continue to stand with George and said he was a knave and George was an honest man etc. The keeper went to the justices and told them he and his house had been plagued for George's sake and the justices said the plagues were on them too {for keeping George in prison}. (This was Justice Bennet of Derby that first called the Children of God 'Quakers' because Quakers bid them tremble at the word of God and this was in the year 1650.

Also the Keeper confessed all to George "how that when George had the several motions from the Lord to go out to speak to people and he would not let me go, and when I laid it upon him that, then he was distracted and amazed for an hour after & much troubled and in such a condition for

a time [that one might have killed him with a Crabb {as the keeper said}, and the justices gave leave that I should have liberty to go a mile and George perceived their end, and George told the gaoler that if they would set {down to} me how far a mile was, I might walk in it but it's like they thought I would go away, but I told him I was not of that spirit and the gaoler confessed it after that they did it with the intent to have me gone away {to ease the plague on them}, and they said I was an honest man".

.....

Appeal for Young Woman

And there was a young woman that was to be put to death for robbing her master and judgement was given and a grave made for her and she carried to execution and I was made to write to the judge and the jury about her and when she came there, they had no power to hang her {as by the paper which I had sent to be read at the gallows may be seen} but she was brought back again and they came with great rage against George {into the prison} but afterwards this young woman came to be convinced.

Threatening Conjurer

One time while George Fox was in gaol a conjurer was brought in and the conjurer threatened how he would talk to George and what he would do with him. He was a wicked ungodly man, but he never had power to open his mouth. One time the conjurer fell out with the gaoler and threatened the gaoler that he would raise the Devil to break his house down and he made the gaoler afraid. George Fox was moved of the Lord to go in the Lord's power and thresh him in it and to say to the conjurer, come let's see what you can do; do your worst and told him that the Devil was raised high enough in him already, but the power of God chained him, and the conjurer slunk away.

Allowed to Walk in the Market

George Fox was allowed to walk by himself a mile from the gaol. He used this liberty and went into the market, and streets and warned people to repentance and back to prison again.

Visit of Relations

Relations of George Fox were much troubled that he was in prison, and say it is a great shame on them for him to be there. (It was strange for people to be in prison for religion at that time). Some thought that George Fox was mad because he stood for purity, perfection and righteousness.

Elizabeth Hooten Preaches

It has been said already that some of George Fox's Friends were moved, as well as he, to preach the Doctrine of Truth, and in this Year, it also happened, that Elizabeth Hooten, of whom mention has been made before, from a true experience of the Lord's work in her, also felt herself moved publicly to preach the way of Salvation to others, being the first woman preacher, by what I am informed of among those that began now generally to be called by the name Quaker. Yet I have found a Dutch book printed in Dort in the year 1647, and called: History of the Troubles in England, concerning the various sects risen there that among other persuasions in London, there were also Women that did preach in large meetings, and were heard by many with great satisfaction: so that the preaching of a Woman was not such a novelty as otherwise it might have been.

In the forgoing year it hath been said, that some Scottish Commissioners having been with Charles II in Holland, were returned to Scotland; and thought the King at first seemed backward to consent to the Presbyterian Covenant, yet seeing that there was no other way open to the Scottish Throne, he came to other thoughts, and so went over to Scotland, and made his entry to Edinburgh, through the gate on which the Quarters of the Earl of Montross were placed; who having endeavoured not long before to subdue the Scots with Arms, had been beaten with his forces and being taken prisoner, executed. The young King now being come into Scotland seemed

willing to comply as much as he could, thereby to ingratiate himself, not only to the Scots, but also with the English, if possible: and in order there unto, he gave forth a Declaration at his Court at Dunfirmling, dated the 16th August 1650. "Though his majesty as a dutiful Son, be obliged to honour the Memory of his Royal Father, and have in estimation the person of his Mother, yet does he desire to be deeply humbled and afflicted in Spirit before God, because of his father's hearkening to evil counsel, and his opposition to the work of Reformation, and to the solemn league and Covenant, by which so much of the Blood of the Lord's people hath been shed in these Kingdoms, and for the idolatry of his mother. Here the King confessed openly that his Father's house was guilty of great Crimes, [Civil war had been fought by one in 5 of the men and one in 20 had died] and plainly signified, that the nation indeed had been wronged by his father's behaviour; and he seemed to promise amendment if he came to be restored. In the mean while they began to see in England, that the Scots were like to make him Head against them; and therefore they openly sent General Fairfax with an Army thither; but he showed himself unwilling to go, chiefly it is believed, by the advice of his wife, who hearkened to the counsel of the Presbyterian Preachers; and those that thought it would contribute to their own settlement, if those of their own persuasion in Scotland were not resisted. But the Parliament many of whose members were independents, did not matter that; but resolved, since General Fairfax resigned voluntarily, to create Oliver Cromwell General of the National Forces in place of Fairfax. Which being done, Cromwell was sent with an army to Scotland, and beat the Scots, not far from Edinburgh, where by that City not long after yielded to him. [In this year was born in Holland, on the 14th November, William the III Prince of Orange, whose Mother was the daughter of the Late King Charles 1st. And this Prince, by a strange revolution in human affairs was advanced to the English Throne in 1689].

Visit of Rice Jones

Rice Jones, a Soldier from Nottingham who had been a Baptist, and several others came on their way to a fight and said to George Fox, "Thy faith stands in a man who died at Jerusalem, and that never happened." George said to him. "Did not Christ, suffer without the gates of Jerusalem through the professing Jews and chief priests and Pilate? And Jones

denied that Christ suffered there outwardly. Then George Fox asked him whether there were not chief priests & Jews and Pilate there outwardly. Then Jones said I (Fox) was a chief priest, but I told him if he did confess there was a chief priest & Jews there outwardly then he must need to confess that Christ was persecuted and suffered there outwardly under them; which as the priest being there outwardly he would not deny, and said he would say little to them: and from this man and his company was the slander raised upon us that the Quakers deny that Christ died and suffered at Jerusalem; which was utterly false and never the least thought of this in our hearts. [But it was these Baptists that cast this upon Friends even though they did not learn it from Friends]. Rice Jones also said that none of the prophets or apostles nor Holy men of God suffered anything outwardly, but that all their sufferings were **inward**. George Fox gave him many instances of how many prophets and apostles suffered, and who inflicted the suffering. So George Fox brought the power of the Lord over Jones' whims and imaginations.

Other people pretended to George Fox that they were 'tryers' of Spirits. George Fox asked them "What is the first step to peace? What was it by which a man might see his salvation?" They said George Fox was mad; that they came to try Spirits and did not know themselves or their own Spirits.

Early in 1651, notwithstanding their recent defeat, the Scots resolved to crown their new King, which they did in January 1651 after he had sworn to maintain the covenant.

Returning to George fox in Derby Gaol:

Will you be a Captain?

Just as George Fox's six-month sentence in the house of correction was due to end, the battle at Worcester also approached. The house of correction was filled with persons that they had taken up to be soldiers, and then they wanted George Fox to be their Captain, and go forth to Worcester to fight, and the soldiers cried that they would have none but Him. So the keeper of the house of correction was commanded to bring George up before the commissioners and soldiers in the market place, and there they professed Georges' preferment because of his virtues as they said with many other compliments. They asked George if he would not take up arms for the Commonwealth against the King.

George told them that he lived in the life and power that took away the occasion of all wars, and he knew from whence all wars did arise - from the lust according to James' doctrine.

They still courted George to accept their offer, and George says, "They thought that I did but compliment them, but I told them I was come into a covenant of peace which was before wars and strife's. They said their offer was made in love and kindness to me because of 'Georges' virtues etc. I told them if the offer was made in love and kindness, I trample it under my feet".

They then told the gaoler to take George away and cast him into the dungeon amongst rogues and felons. George was put in the dungeon amongst 30 felons in a lousy stinking place without any bed; where they kept him almost half a year although sometimes they would let George walk in the garden for they had a belief in him that he would not go away.

Brings Back another Prisoner

[One fellow that should have been the Lieutenant and refused, was also cast into prison. The gaoler's wife said she would let him go out and walk with George in the backyard'. As George walked a little ahead of him, George heard the hedge crack and so George stepped back to him and asked him why he would try to escape. George brought him in so he went out no more with George, but when this fellow walked out alone, he ran away. They soon captured him again.]

Life in Prison

There were several sorts of religions in the prison, and on the first days (Sundays) when George got out, he would go and visit them in their meetings in the prison.

A Trooper's Visit

Then George was in the house of correction, there came a trooper to George and said he was sitting in the steeple house hearing the priest and he was in exceeding great trouble and the voice of the Lord came to him saying, 'What, dost not thou know that my servant is in prison? Go to him for directions'. He came and George spoke to him and opened his understanding and settled his mind in the light and spirit of God in himself. He told [him] that which showed him his sin and troubled him for it, would show him his salvation; for he that shows a man his sin is he that takes it away. So the Lord's power opened to him so he began to have great understandings of the Lord's truth and mercies and began to speak boldly in his quarters amongst the soldiers and others {concerning truth}. The Scriptures were very much opened to him so that he said that his two colonels [Barton & Saunders] were as blind as Nebuchadnezzar to cast George Fox - the servant of the Lord - into prison. The colonels began also to have a spite and malice against the trooper, so that when he came to

the Worcester fight and the two armies lay one nigh the other; two came out of the kings army to challenge two out of the parliament army to fight with them and then his two colonels made choice of him and another to go and fight with them. They went forth and the trooper's companion was killed and the trooper then drove the two from the king's army within musket shot of the town without firing his pistol at them. (This he told George with his own mouth). When the fight was over the trooper saw their deceit and hypocrisy and he lay down his arms and saw an end to fighting, and how the Lord had miraculously preserved him.

When George was in the House of Correction, George's relatives came to see him and went to the Justice that caste George into prison. They were willing to put up bail money of £100 and others in Derby £50 that George might go home with them, and George not come amongst them again to declare against the priests. They brought George up with them before the Justice, but George would not have them bound by putting up money, because he was innocent of any ill behaviour and had spoken the word of life and truth to them. Justice Bennett got up into a rage and as George was kneeling down to pray that the Lord would forgive him, he ran upon George and struck him and cried, 'Away with him gaoler; take him away gaoler'. [Many times when they were setting George at liberty, George was moved of the Lord God to write to them and then their rage would be up and they would keep George in prison again].

Death Penalty - George Writes to Judges

In this George was exceedingly oppressed and burdened with Judges & Magistrates and Courts; and was moved several times to write to the Judges concerning the putting of men to death for such small things as cattle and for money. He wrote to let them know how contrary to the law of God it was. After George wrote, the burden lifted; the heavens were opened and the glory of God shown over it all. (Two men were sentenced

to suffer death for small things and George was moved to admonish them for their theft and to encourage them concerning their expected suffering, showing them that it is contrary to the law of God. A little after they had suffered, (by being put to death), their spirits appeared to George as he was walking and he saw the men well).

George also wrote to the Judges what a sore thing it was that prisoners should lie so long in gaol, and how that they learned badness one from another in talking of their bad things and therefore speedy justice should have been done. George was a tender youth in the fear of God and was grieved to hear the bad language and George was made often to reprove them for their words and bad carriage each towards another.

Preserved and Released

So people came to admire that George should be so preserved and kept for they could never catch a word nor action for almost a whole year to make anything of, for the Lord's infinite power upheld and preserved George all the time [but many turned away that had been convinced, because of the persecution].

Sometimes George Fox's accusers would have had George up before the Parliament and another time they would have banished George to Ireland. At first they called George a deceiver and seducer and a blasphemer, then when God brought his plagues upon them, they said George was an honest virtuous man, but people speaking good report and bad report did not lift up or put down George Fox - praise be the Lord.

So at Last George was set free in 1651 and went toward his home county; where he had meetings and the Lord's power and Spirit accompanied him.

Jumping on to the following year and the talk he gave on Firebank Fell in 1652:

I went to a brook and got a little water and came and sat down on top of a rock, for the word of the Lord came to me that I must sit down on the rock in the mountain even as Christ had done before. In the afternoon people gathered ...it was judged there were about 1000 people.

I declared freely and largely God's everlasting truth and word of life for about three hours.

Many old people had gone into chapel and were looking out of the windows and thought it strange to see a man preach on a hillside instead of in their church as they called it. So I opened to the people that the stephouse and the ground on which it stood was no holier than the mountain and that the temples and dreadful houses of God as they were called was not set up by the command of God or Christ. Nor were the priests as Aron's priesthood, nor were tithes to them set up by the command of God or Christ. For Christ was come who ended the temple and the priests and tithes. Christ said learn of me, and God said this is my beloved son hear him.

For the Lord had sent me with his everlasting Gospel to preach his word of life and bring people off from all those temples tithes priests and rudiments of the world that had gotten up since the Apostles days; that had been set up by those who had erred from the spirit and power the apostles were in . This was so that all might come to know Christ as, teacher, counsellor, sheppard to feed them; bishop to oversee them; prophet to open to them, and to know their bodies to be temples of God and Christ to dwell in.

So I opened the prophets and the figures and shadows and turned them to Christ the substance. I opened the parables of Christ and the things that had been hid from the beginning. I showed them how the Epistles were written to the elect: and the state of apostasy that had been since the apostles' days. I showed how the priests had gotten the scriptures but they are not in the Spirit that gave them forth, for they have made a trade of their words and have put them into chapter and verse. I showed how the teachers and priests were now to be found in the steps of the false prophets, chief priests, Scribes and Pharisees, against which the prophets, Christ and his Apostles cried, so they are judged by the prophets, Christ and the Apostles' Spirit.

So I turned the people to the spirit of God and from darkness to light that they might believe in it and become children of Light, turned them from the power of Satan which they had been under to God so that with the Spirit of Truth, they might be led into all the truth of the prophets, Christ and the Apostles words.”

Writing on May 9th 1654. .Anthony Pearson (who had been a justice of the peace) described the impact of the message

I have long professed to serve and worship the true God, and as I though (above many sects) attained to a high pitch in religion; now alas! I find my work will not abide the fire. My notions were swelling vanities without power or life:

I never understood what it was to love enemies, to bless them that curse, to render good for evil, to use the world as using it not, to lay down life for the brethren,

I never tasted: what purity and perfection meant

All my religion was but the hearing of the ear, the believing and talking of a God and Christ in heaven or a place at a distance, I knew not where.

Oh how gracious was the lord to me in carrying me to Judge Fell’s to see the wonder of his power and wisdom, - a family walking in the fear of the Lord, conversing daily with Him, crucified to the world and living only to God. I was confounded, all my knowledge and wisdom became folly; my mouth was stopped, my conscience convinced, and the secrets of my heart made manifest, and the Lord discovered to be near, whom I ignorantly worshiped.....

George Fox and James Naylor have helped me with their counsel by letter; they are full of pity and compassion; and though I was their enemy, they are my friends:.....I find my heart is full of deceit and I

exceedingly fear to be beguiled (as I have been) and to be seduced into a form without power, into a profession before I possess the Truth;³²

Writing in 1655 **Francis Howgill** (who had been trained at University to be an Anglican Priest) wrote that what he heard from the talk on Firbank fell was 'That the light of Christ in Man was the way to Christ, and he believed the eternal word of truth, and that of God in his Conscience sealed it. Appendix 9 is in this editors words Francis's account of his search and formative experiences, of outward ceremonies, and empty words that had not brought inward change and freedom. So Francis Howgill's primary travail when taking the message to London was that Christ should be brought forth and formed in the people.

For the immediate impact of the message in 1653 William Edmundson, the start of William Edmundson's Journal is in Appendix 7

To summarize - before we lose the wood in the trees, what I am seeing is the following: (You can decide later if the text confirms this).

George Fox realized that Christ Jesus could speak to his condition.

He looked to the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, to bring to remembrance what Jesus said and to lead into all truth.

He saw Christ as the Word of God who became flesh; dwelt in this world, and taught the new and living way God had planned. While God had in times past spoken through the prophets he had now spoken through his Son. He saw that we are to listen to him, and be his friends by doing what he commanded.

Fox was shown that all was to be done in and by Christ.

³² Anthony Pearson was a Justice of the Peace in 3 counties, The above quote from p 10 of Letters of Early Friends illustrative of the History of the Society published 1841 Harvey and Dalton Gracechurch Street London

He saw that the scriptures were given forth by the Holy Spirit, and we need the Holy Spirit to understand them.

He saw that the Law and the prophets were until John and that then the Kingdom of God was proclaimed. He wrote in detail contrasting the Old Testament and Old Covenant with the New Testament and New Covenant.

He saw he was called to turn people from darkness to light that they might receive Christ, and his power to live.

Early Friends were united by desire to know the Spirit and Teaching of Christ and to live accordingly. They were looking for an inward work of the Holy Spirit and Grace and this showed in their outward lives.

Did not all the actions of Friends included in Chapter One come from owning and listening to Jesus Christ as their teacher? Were not the reasons they ended up in prison mainly due to listening to what Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount?

For example, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus took the traditions of his day and teachings of the Old Testament, and explained the new and living way God had planned”but I say to you: swear not” Matthew 5:34-36..... “love your enemies” Matthew 5:43-44.....”worship in spirit and truth”John5:24 so it appears to me that early Friends saw these teachings as superseding the traditions and teachings of The Old Testament.

Quite simply, the reasons behind why early Friends were put in prison were based on living what Jesus taught. Clearly they wanted to be friends of Jesus Christ by doing what he had commanded; (by his life as well as by what he said).

Were not Early Friends united by their commitment to be friends of Christ by doing what he commanded? (John 15:14) Were they not united by their commitment to live for Christ rather than by confession of a common creed?

The web sites of both Friends United Meeting (FUM) and Evangelical Friends International (EFI) point to John 15:14 as the origin of the name “Friends”, I believe that what most Friends potentially have in common

today is the desire to be “today” Friends of Christ, by doing what Jesus commanded.

For me the diversity of thought among Un-programed Meeting Quakers today confirms my feeling that it was not just meeting together in silence that was the source of early Friends’ unity of purpose; it was their desire to know the Spirit and Teaching of Christ. Not just to know for the sake of knowledge, but in order to live accordingly and so be Friends of Jesus by doing what he commanded.

Early Friends met to worship God in Spirit and in Truth in expectancy that, as promised, where two or three were gathered in his name, Jesus would be in their midst?³³ They expected that the Spirit of Truth would bring to remembrance what Jesus taught and lead them into all truth.³⁴ They waited upon the Lord to renew their strength, and give them the life and power that was displayed in the New Testament church.

Why then are many Quakers who worship in un-programed meetings today saying that the meeting for Worship was the source and central to the lives of Early Friends? How can people think that the actions of early Friends came out of coming together in a vacuum?

That Early Friends lives were so closely tied to the teaching of Jesus did not blind them to realizing that God’s spirit was also leading other people to have similar ideals, just as Paul in Romans 2 was aware that there were people in the world who were living right.

³³ Matthew 18:20

³⁴ John 14:26&16:13

Chapter Three

The Word of God and Nature of the Light,

Source of Light

Since its start, the Society of Friends has spoken a lot about the Light, but it is not always clear what they mean by the Light. For 360 years some Friends have argued about the source of the light experienced by early Friends; was it inward or inner etc. etc.?

Since 1694 people have been looking to George Fox's Journal to understand his message. Thomas Elwood, who alone was trusted to edit the Journal, increased by 7000 words the estimated³⁵ 10000 words written on George Fox's instruction for his Journal about his Formative Years 1624-1650. In doing so George Fox's pivotal experience "when his hope in all people was gone" was hidden among many words and the thrust confused.³⁶

The most authentic examples of what Early Friends were preaching are to be found in surviving document from that time - Original Copy of 1653 tract "To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom." This is in the British Museum and a slightly revised version from 1655 in Friend's House London. A further revision of it forms the first Chapter of Gospel Truth Demonstrated published in 1706.

Here follows extracts from the 1706 version of the 1653 tract produced by George Fox when Friends reached out to London. (Full text "To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom." Edited by Charles. B. Lamb is available for free download website www.cblfriend.com).

The nature of the light: Christ enlightens every one that comes into the world. John 1:9

If you love the enlightening Light of Christ you will let that Light shine on what you are doing.

For those that walk in the Light, there is no occasion of stumbling Jude 24 *for it teaches righteousness and holiness.*

³⁵ Norman Penney's 1911 estimate of the number of words on the missing 16 hand written pages

³⁶ Analysis of this is contained in Booklet George Fox Formative Years. (See page 2)

It will keep you:

- *From lying,* Matthew 5:37 *and not let thee lie; See Appendix 8 William Edmundson p102*
- *In tenderness of conscience* John 8:9 Acts 24:16 Romans 2:15 *towards God and man;* 1 Timothy 1:19 Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10
- *From swearing* Matthew 5:35, James 5:12 *it will check thee if thou dost.*
- *From taking God's name in vain.*
- *From drunkenness,* Luke 21:34 *and vain company.*
- *From adultery* Matthew 19:9 1Corinthians6:9
- *From whoredom,* Hebrews 13:4 KJV *1 Corinthians 6:19*
- *From theft,* Matthew 15:19
- *From quarrelling,* Matthew 5:21-22
- *From fighting,* James 4:1-4
- *From abusing thyself*
 (“Loose” living, 1 Corinthians 6:9-19 KJV fornication, sexual relationship without lifelong faithfulness which exposes one to sexually transmitted diseases, and so is abusive to one’s own body). 1 Corinthians 10:8 Acts 15:20 Mark 7:20-22 Matthew 15:18-20
- *From envy.* 1 Timothy 6:4

This Light which is of God, will:

- *Let you see all the works of the world.* 1Corinthians 4:5
- *Draw thee out of the worships of the world.*
- *Keep thee in the fear of God where the true pure wisdom is seen.*

But as the eternal light which Christ has enlightened you withal is loved, minded, and taken heed unto, the daily cross Luke 9:23 *is taken up. The fear of the Lord grows. The true, pure Wisdom increases* James 3:17; *the errors of the wicked are exposed and made manifest.*

And waiting in the Light John 1:9 *which Christ has enlightened you with, you come to be disciples of Jesus Christ, and servants to the Truth.*

In that Light which shows thee all this, stand. Here thou wilt:

- *See the mercies of God made manifest.*
- *See the promises of God fulfilled.* 2 Peter 1:4
- *Find a Saviour;*
- *See what is cast out from God, and what enters.*

For the first step of peace is to stand still in the Light, (which discovers things contrary to it) for power and strength to stand against that nature which the Light reveals. Here grace grows, here is God alone glorified and exalted.

The True Church are those who are born again of the immortal Seed, by the Word of God 1Peter 1:23 *...And this is the Word* John 1:14 *by which the Saints are born again. You are born again by the immortal Word, which lives and endures forever; and feeding upon the milk of the Word,* 1 Peter 2:2 *which Word is God, which Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. So he (Christ) is the Head of the real-Church. It is disrespectful to Jesus Christ for you to say, the letter [the Bible] is the Word of God - when the letter says, God is the Word;* John 1:1

Awake, awake all people everywhere who live in forms. See what you possess. Not having that eternal Spirit that gave forth the Scriptures, all your formal prayers, formal preaching, formal singing, will be found as the chaff which is for the unquenchable fire. For Christ is risen; the true Light shines; the glory of the Lord appears, and you are discovered to him to be empty of that eternal Spirit, in your understandings, which [Spirit] gave forth the Scriptures John 14:26.

Wait in Light to receive Christ and power

'I am the Light,' saith Christ 'which enlightens everyone'. That Light you hate, and all who hate this Light, set up teachers to suit themselves. But all who love this Light are of God and lead to God which is a cross to all the world and this Light is in every one. Wait in it to receive Christ. And, as many as receive Christ John 1:12, *to them he gives power to become 'the sons*

and daughters of God', - "who are not born of the will of man, nor by the will of man, but by the will of God" John 1:12-13.

All who hate this Light [of Christ], they set up to be their [own] light such as are called of men 'Masters'; Matthew 23:6-11 have the chiefest places in the assemblies; stand making long prayers; lay heavy burdens upon the people.

The Saints' Teacher

The Light [of Christ] is free that has enlightened John 1:4-9 every one that comes into the world; Thou that hates it, has learned thy condemnation; it lets thee see all the evil deeds of thy heart. And the Gospel is free Matthew 10:8 to every creature, not to be bought and sold for money.

Distinguishing light, life and power from the letter.

Now do not think that I hold free-will here, man's free-will. I speak of that which is contrary to man's will and loving the Light, it will keep your wills from running, and your will from willing anything, and keep it in subjection. But you that hates this Light and makes a profession of God and Christ, and says, the letter is the Word, and the four books Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the Gospel, he knowest not Christ which is "glad tidings"; "the Lamb of God" who takes away the sin of the world. For the letter takes not away sin. And thou that sayest thou had not come to repentance, if thou had not known letter, thou deniest Christ, who came to call sinners to repentance, and before the letter was. (It is he that calls sinners to repentance and not the letter).

But the letter is a declaration of the Word - God is the Word. John 1:1-3. And it [the letter] is a declaration of the Light - Christ is the Light. And it [the letter] is a declaration of the Spirit, but the Spirit is not [in] it; a declaration of the Power; but the Power is not [in] it. The Power and the Life and the Light was in them that spoke it forth, which the world hated.

O shameless men that tell people the letter is the Word, and buy and sell it for money. And the grace is free, which has appeared to all men, which is

the saints' Teacher. And you need not have any other teacher if you own the grace, which shows your ungodliness and worldly lusts.

O then all you that profess, see that you possess! And profess no more than you are!”

There is a lot more in the 1653 tract “To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom.”³⁷ but the preceding quotes gives you a flavour. The following thought also comes from the tract.

George Fox appreciated so much that Jesus Christ is The Word of God, that he felt it was disrespectful³⁸ of Christ for anyone to call any letter, scripture or book ‘The Word of God’. This is not to say that Friends did not accept what scripture said about itself, that it came as holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit ^{2 Peter 1:20-21}, and that we need the Holy Spirit to enable us to understand it.

³⁷ The tract was brought to London in 1654 by Isabel Buttery and a companion, who were courageous women. For letting people have their books at Westminster the Mayor had her sent to the Bridwell house of correction. See page 4-6 of Letters of Early Friends illustrative of the History of the Society published 1841 Harvey and Dalton Gracechurch Street London

³⁸ This thought is put so bluntly in the 1653 1st 1655 editions of tract “To all that would know the way to the kingdom that 1704 version substitutes a milder word. The editor is not aware of any Friends book of discipline calling the Bible the Word of God till an Evangelical Friends Church did so in the 1970’s

Chapter Four

Why different Ideals

So why did early Friends end up with different ideals than others who professed to be Christians? That some did not possess what they professed does not answer the question.

In part, it appears to me that the difference was due to Friends' commitment to live rather than a commitment to profess.

- Some professed Christians were united by professed standard beliefs; defined by creeds, and outward ceremonies/sacraments.
- Others professed Christians united by statements of faith that the Bible is the Word of God, and their final authority.

The 39 Articles of the Anglican Church

In particular, in England at the time of George Fox, both the Anglican 39 Articles of 1563 and the Westminster Confession of 1646 proclaim the 66 books of the Bible to be the Word of God. In addition, the Anglican 39 Articles say that one part of scripture must not be interpreted as contrary to another. (The Bishops put together the 39 Articles when Queen Elizabeth the First desired a united church behind her army, and the Westminster Confession was approved when Parliament in London were fighting King Charles 1 of England).

While it is easy to find support for war in Deuteronomy 20 and the conquering of Jericho, how can anyone say that the teaching of Jesus, to love our enemies and do good to those who hate us is not contrary to that Old Testament teaching? Early friends included the following in their letter to King Charles 2nd in 1660:

“The Spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from such a thing, as evil, and again to move us into it. We certainly know and testify to the world, that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us into all truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdoms of this world.”

But, this still does not fully answer why early Friends came up with different ideals than other professed Christians of their day who were united by statements of faith that the Bible was the Word of God and their final authority.

It is recorded in George Fox's journal at the end of 1652 that:

“A Priest, a Baptist, came to a meeting atop of a hill and fell a jangling: first he said the Scriptures was the word of God: and I told him they were the words of God but not Christ the word: and bid him prove it by Scripture what he said”..... it was agreed to meet again. So when they met again George “declared the day of the Lord to them: and turned them to Christ Jesus: and he out with his Bible and said it was the word of God: and I told him it was the words of God but not God the word: his answer was that he would prove the Scriptures to be the word of God before all the people: so I had a man that could write to take down both what he said and what I said as may be larger seen in my book of letters.

But when he had spoken a while and could not prove it for I kept him to the Scripture for chapter and verse for it: and keeping him to prove that one thing he asserted: and in going to prove that one error he run in to twenty: and the people gnashed their teeth and said he would have me anon. But when he could not prove it: then he said he would prove it a god: thus the Baptist priest tore himself till he sweat and boiled himself and his company: all being full of wrath and I hept³⁹ his assertions on the head of him and them all so that at last they went away confounded and could prove nothing they asserted. For I told them what the Scriptures said about themselves: they were the words of God but Christ was the word⁴⁰. And the Lord's power came over all and confounded their mischief which they intended against me and Friends were established in Christ.....”

³⁹ heaped

⁴⁰ This appreciation that Jesus Christ is the Word of God, has been so strong, that I have not found any Friend's book of Faith and Practice or Discipline calling the Bible 'The Word of God' before the Evangelical Friends Alliance was formed in 1965. (They later became Evangelical Friends International; joined the National Association of Evangelicals and endorsed the National Association of Evangelical's Statement of Faith. Section 1 of this says, "We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God").

The Richmond Declaration puts it this way, “He is the eternal Word, who was with God and was God, revealing himself in infinite wisdom and love”.

Well known is the letter early Friends wrote to the Governor of the Barbados in 1671:

“Concerning the Holy Scriptures, we do believe that they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who as the Scripture itself declares 2Peter1:21 spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled (He that fulfils them is Christ); and they are “Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.⁴¹ We believe that the Holy Scriptures are the words of God; for it is said in Exodus 20:1 'God spake all these words saying', meaning the Ten Commandments given forth upon Mount Sinai. In Revelations 22:18 John saith, 'I testify to every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book; if any man addeth unto these words, and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy (not the word) etc. So in Luke 1:20, 'Because thou believest not my words...'” And in John 5:47, 15:7, 14:23, and 12:47. So we call the Scriptures, as Christ and the apostles called them, and holy men of God called them, vis. - the words of God.

In the original versions of Barclay’s Apology (1676 Latin and 1678 English) Robert Barclay included in Proposition 3 - Concerning The Scriptures “2 Timothy 3:15,16,17 – *The Holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation, which is through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable- for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*” This quotation which is in agreement with

the Wycliffe, Tyndale, and Coverdale⁴² translations does not include the extra “is” that one finds in the King James Version. The added “is” causes the verse to imply that “all scripture has been inspired by God”. In the Nestle Marshall interlinear Greek translation⁴³ [] indicate that the [is] was a word for which there is no Greek equivalent, inserted by the translators. Elizabeth Bathurst used a similar translation to Barclay in Truth Vindicated 1679. The letter to the Governor of Barbados (above) starts in 2 Timothy 3:16 and then jumps back to verse 15 and avoids the extra “is” by skipping the start of verse 16. So the letter to the Governor, Barclay⁴⁴ and Bathurst all avoided adding the extra “is”⁴⁵ - avoid adding to the words of the book.⁴⁶ The interlinear translation⁴⁷ of 1st Century Aramaic Peshitta text reads “every writing which is by the Spirit written profitable is for teaching and for correction and for direction and for a course in righteousness.

Fox also saw Scripture in the context that, while in times past God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, he had now spoken by his son. Hebrews 1:1, God asks us to listen to him. Matthew 17:7. While the law came through Moses, John 1:17, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ John 1-17, - the Word of God in whom was life and that life was the light of men John 1:4. That life was the light of everyone John 8:12 coming into the world - Jesus Christ the way, the truth and the life John 14:6, who faithfully taught what his Father gave him. John 8:38 John 12:49 . Those that were of the truth would hear his voice John 19:37. We need the Spirit of God to open the scriptures to us; to bring to remembrance what Jesus taught (John 14:26) and to lead us into all truth. John 16:13..

⁴¹ 2 Timothy 3:15

⁴² The one George Fox is thought to have read growing up.

⁴³ The interlinear translation of Greek word for ‘inspired’ is God-breathed , the only time the word occurs in the New Testament and it does not occur elsewhere in Greek. It is like as if it was translated from the Aramaic words for ‘God – breathed’ which is very similar to the Aramaic word for ‘written by the Spirit’

⁴⁴ Dean Freiday 1967 Barclays Apology in modern English added the “is” (p58 1991 Barclay Press printing)

⁴⁵ The extra “is” used by some to imply that all the contents of the 66 books in the Bible were inspired by God.

⁴⁶ See quote from Revelations at end of letter to Governor of Barbados.

⁴⁷ Translation by Glen David Bauscher. Copyright Lulu Publishing 2006 5th Edition 2011

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus explained the new and living way God had planned. He took the traditions of his day and teachings of the Old Testament, and, with his “but I say to you. Matthew 5,6,7 Luke 6 John 4:23” sayings, he taught the new way: swear not love your enemies worship in spirit and truthso early Friends saw these teachings as superseding the traditions and teachings of the Old Testament - similar to what the early church had done in Acts 15.

Longing for the Life and Power they saw demonstrated in the Book of Acts, Friends saw themselves as primitive Christianity revived. They felt that many professed Christians of their time had returned to Old Testament ways and so committed apostasy.

Seeing from above how much early Friends differentiated between the teachings of Jesus and the Old Testament, I wondered, ‘Where did the phrase, “The Holy Scriptures of both the Old and New Testament” (found both in the Book of Discipline of Ohio Conservative and the Richmond Declaration of 1887) come from?’ The Richmond declaration says, “*It has ever been and still is the belief of the Society of Friends that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God.*”

Let us back up. During the reign of Charles 2nd, king of England, Friends were persecuted along with other dissenters and they were, along with others, offered relief from some types of legal harassment in the Toleration Act of 1688 if they would ascribe Christian belief as follows: “*I A.B. profess faith in God the Father and in Jesus Christ his Eternal Son, the true God and in the Holy Spirit, one God blessed for evermore, and do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine Inspiration.*” The underlined phrase was that proposed to Sir Thomas Cregis by George Whitehead and John Vaughton and accepted to replace draft phrase, “*do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the revealed will and word of God.*” (Details from biography of George Whitehead). Note: At the time of the Act of Toleration or just after it, George Fox wrote to remind Friends that the law and prophets were until

John. William Mead⁴⁸ was one of the Friends who had to profess acceptance of the terms of the Act at houses of Parliament..⁴⁹

In 1689 George Fox wrote in the last chapter of Gospel Truth Demonstrated⁵⁰ about the Law and the Prophets being until John and then the kingdom of God was proclaimed. This was not a new thought because several times Fox wrote about the New and Living Way God planned and how the New Testament and New Covenant were not like the Old Testament and Old Covenant. The writing of it in the year of the Act of Toleration appears to show that Fox felt it necessary at that time to stress the change that came with John (the Baptist). Thomas Elwood also appeared to understand the importance of this concept. The thought was added three times into George Fox's Journal 1647 - that the Lord made him sensible as to how the Law and the Prophets were until John.....Luke 16:16 Matthew 11:13.

Looking back to 1689 from over 320 years later, it can be observed that the wording Friends ascribed to in the Act of Toleration that "acknowledged the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine Inspiration" do not say that all the contents of the Old and New Testament are Scripture. Also, defining Scripture as words "given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who (as the Scripture itself declares 2 Peter 1:21)"spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost", does not mean that ALL that the prophets said was inspired by God and that there were no occasions when prophets - having begun in the spirit did not go on in the flesh as Paul described the Galatians as doing (Galatians 3:3).

To summarise the aim of Early Friends:

⁴⁸ (William Mead the Husband of Sarah Fell who George Fox often visited with in London, and in whose trust he left his Journal when he died.)

⁴⁹ Looking for ongoing references to Christ as the Word, the following reference was pointed out: A CONSERVATIVE STATEMENT OF FAITH, 1912. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

".....Neither do we call the Bible the 'Word of God,'... [which] as abundantly shown in the Scriptures themselves, is a name applied to Christ, and not to the Bible... Friends in declining to call the Bible 'The Word of God' or the primary rule of faith, (assigning that place to the Spirit, which was the inspiration of, and can alone open the Scriptures to our understanding).

⁵⁰ (Many of the quotes in Appendices were taken from these writings in Gospel Truth Demonstrated).

It was to know life in Christ John 1:4, the light of the world and to walk in that light. They did not want to be like those who searched the scriptures (expecting to find eternal life in them) yet failing to see that these same scriptures bore witness to Christ. They did not wish to fail in coming to Him (Christ) that they might have life. John 5:36. Friends' realised that God had asked them to listen to his beloved Son and that the Holy Spirit had been promised, Luke 11:9-13 to bring to remembrance what Jesus had said John 14:26 and to lead into all truth. John 16:13. They waited upon the Lord to give them strength to live what Jesus taught.

Friends saw that, while Christ had come to his own and been refused by them, there was still the promise: "To as many as received him He gave power to be the children of God" John 1:9-12.

Friends also saw that the law and the prophets were until John, Luke 16:16 and that God had spoken by his Son Hebrews 1:1-2. The law had come through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:16 The Son faithfully declared what the Father gave him. John 12:49, John 8:28. Therefore, Friends set out to be His F/friends John 15:14 by doing what he taught – through the example of his life as well as his words. They did not want to be people who professed to know God, then deny him by their deeds Titus 1:16 or turn the grace of God into wantonness, Jude 4 Wycliffe Tyndale Coverdale Geneva translations.

Friends saw that there was no point in calling him 'Lord, Lord' and not doing what he said Luke 6:46. They heard Jesus' 'I-say-unto-you' sayings in the Sermon on the Mount and endeavoured to put them into practice – e.g., by refusing to swear. Matthew 5:34. They wanted to know the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that sets free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:1-2.

Friends clearly desired to experience Life - the light of human beings John 1:4 be led into all truth by the Spirit John 16:13-14, John 14:26 they listened to Jesus Christ as their teacher telling of the new and living way God planned.

Clearly early Friends chose to do what Jesus commanded even if this led to suffering in prison and possible death.

Friends' saw that obedience to Christ's; teachings - where these differed from the teachings of the Old Testament - were not an optional extra, but an integral part of the New Covenant.

In contrast, most professing Christians were united by outward sacraments, creeds or statements of faith, so while apparently looking to Jesus Christ for salvation, at the same time, looked to their Priests and Ministers to teach them how to live. Many apparently looked as much to the Old Testament as to the New for their moral ideals.

Jesus continues to ask "Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6:46

While there is much more that could be added, it appears that a place to start to understand early Friends is to do what they did, which was listen in their own minds to the enlightening light of Christ, the teachings of Jesus. This is the Light that draws us to know wisdom from above, James 3:13-18 - that draws us out of earthly wisdom; (out of the ways of this world) so we can know pure wisdom. We wait together in the name of Jesus for strength from God to live that message.

Chapter Five

Which ‘God’ are we talking of?

Points to ponder for those who see nothing special about the Message of Jesus

William H. Sinton, one of the first residents of Quaker House Belfast, (where Friends endeavoured to increase understanding and bring together politicians from both sides of the divide in Northern Ireland in 1978) said the following :- *“All down the generations, and even today, men are going out, and killing their fellow men, and appear to be doing it with God’s blessing. And yet, one of the things my God requires of me is that I refrain from killing my fellow men.....”*

Early Friends saw that all fighting with outward carnal weapons and war itself was inconsistent with the spirit and teaching of Christ.⁵¹ There are other aspects too, e.g. (in brief) ongoing relationship with the God (as revealed by Jesus Christ) puts love as the motivation for our lives; requires that as far as it lies with us, we live at peace with all people, forgive, apologise, extend mercy.

The word “God” means so many different things to different people that without context, I do not know what people mean when they use it. Please clarify which God you are talking about.

If you say there are many roads to God, I wonder, which ‘God’?

If you say that God is so loving that he would never punish anyone; are you saying that God does not care about how people treat one another? Are you saying that there will never be a day of fairness?

Consider:-

- The story of Lazarus Luke 16:19-31 and the poor man at the gate; was the story unfair to the rich man?

⁵¹ Over the past 40 years I have developed booklet “Is war compatible with the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ

- The story of the man who had already been forgiven, but who would not forgive. *Matthew 18:23-35*
- The importance given to caring for those who are least able to care for themselves. *Matthew 25:31-46,*

Let's not forget that Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." Also what James said, "If a brother or sister is ill clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled' without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?" *James 2:1-17,*

Points to ponder for those who look to the Bible as their Final Authority

You profess the Bible to be your final authority. You recognise that God spoke in times past by the prophets, who, moved by the Holy Spirit *2Peter 1:21,* prophesied the coming of God's Son (prophesies that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Word of God who lived on earth).

The law came through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ *John 1:17.* In times past God spoke by the prophets, now God speaks through his son *Hebrews 1:1-2.* God asks us to listen to him *Matthew 17:5.*

Jesus came that we may have life, and have it more abundantly. Jesus faithfully taught the new and living way God planned. Jesus asks us to be his friends by doing what he commanded. He did not come to judge the world *John 12:47-48,* but his words *John 12:48, John 15:22, Mark 8:38 Luke 9:23-27* remain benchmarks in the sands of time. The Qur'an surah 4:159 acknowledges that Jesus will be a witness on the day of Judgement.

On the one hand, do we claim to have eternal life because of Jesus Christ while on the other hand, try to find excuses for not always following what Jesus taught? Perhaps we need to remind ourselves yet again about the question Jesus asked, "Why do you call me Lord, but do not do what I say?" *Luke 6:46* Jesus went on to remind us that, "Not everyone who calls me Lord will enter the kingdom, but those who do the will of my father in Heaven." *Matthew 7:21.*

Romans 8:9 tells us that anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. And Jesus said that the promised Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance what he said John 14:26 and “take what is mine and declare it to you” John 16:13-15. Might it be wise to assume that the Holy Spirit Jesus promised will not lead us contrary to what Jesus taught nor lead us to go on in the flesh as the Galatians did? Galatians 3:3

Points to ponder for all who look to God as revealed by Jesus Christ.

May we all examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith 2 Corinthians 13:5 - check to see if we, like the foolish Galatians Galatians 3:1-3 are going on in the flesh instead of continuing in the Spirit – staying alert so that we don’t turn the grace of God into Wantonness Jude 4 early translations.

This booklet set out to find the dynamic in early Friends’ lives, as they sought to follow the God revealed by Jesus Christ. The Light of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ still shines asking us to do to others as we would like them to do to us; Matthew 7:12 Luke 6:31, to love our enemies; bless those who make life difficult for us; do good to those who hate us Luke 6:27-28; forgive if we have anything against anybody, Mark 11:25 and as we are aware of those who have things against us’ endeavour to be reconciled with them Matthew 5:23-24 Romans 12:18. It is only as we wait in that Light of Christ Jesus that we can see clearly whether we are living a life of love that endeavours to live fairly with all or whether we have moved back into natural resentment, hatred and support for war. Whether we’ like early Friends⁵², choose to follow the Teachings of Jesus where they differ from what went before.

Finally it appears that George Fox’s favourite Question was⁵³ “Are you living in the life and power and Spirit that the early church experienced?”

. Appendix 1 - Preaching:

Going into all the world to preach the Gospel

Introduction to book of Epistles published in 1702

⁵² William Edmundson journal starts out with how he became a Friend and his first actions as a Friends and it is interesting to see how it confirms much in this booklet. Booklet available of first 2 chapters.

⁵³ Fox used words of similar intent on many occasions

“A testimony of how the Lord sent George Fox (GF) forth at first in the year 1643.

When the Lord first sent me forth in the Year 1643, I was sent as an Innocent Lamb (and Young in Years) amongst (Men in the Nature of) Wolves , Dogs , Bears , Lions and Tigers unto the World, which the devil had made like as Wilderness, no right Way then found out of it. And I was To Turn People from Darkness to the Light, which Christ, the Second Adam, did Enlighten them withal; that so they might see Christ, their way to God, with the Spirit of God, which he doth pour upon all Flesh, that they might have an Understanding to know the things of God, and to know him, and his son Jesus Christ, which is Eternal Life; and so might worship and serve the Living God, their Maker and Creator, who takes Care of all, who is Lord of all; and with the Light and Spirit of God they might know the Scriptures, which were given forth from the Spirit of God in the Saints, and Holy Men and Women of God.

And when many began to be turned to the Light (which is the Life in Christ) and the Spirit of God, which gave them Understanding, and had found the Path of the Just, the Shining Light, then did the Wolves, Dogs, Dragons , Bears, Lions, Tigers, Wild Beasts, and Birds of Prey make a roaring and a Screeching Noise against the Lambs, Sheep, Doves and Children of Christ, and were ready to devour them and me and tear us to pieces. But the Lord’s arm and Power did preserve me; though many times I was in Danger of my Life, and very often cast into Dungeons and Prisons, and haled before Magistrates. But all things did work together for good: And the more I was caste into outward Prisons, the more People came out of their Spiritual and Inward Prison (through the preaching of the Gospel), but the Priest and Professors were in such a great Rage, and made the Rude and Profane People in such a Fury, that I could hardly walk in the Streets or go in the Highway, but they were ready oft time to do me a Mischief. But Christ, who has all Power in Heaven and in the Earth, did so restrain and limit them with his Power, that my life was preserved; though many times I was near killed.

Oh! the Burdens and Travails , that I went under! Often my Life pressed down under the Spirits of Professors and Teachers without Life, and the Profane? And Besides, the Troubles afterwards with Backsliders,

Apostates, and false Brethren, which were like so many Judas's in betraying the Truth, and God's Faithful and Chosen Seed, and causing the Way of Truth to be evil spoken of! But the Lord blasted, wasted and confounded them, so none did stand long; for the Lord did either destroy them, or bring them to nought, and his Truth did flourish, and his People in it, to the Praise of God, who is the Revenger of his Chosen." GF

Examples:

When George Fox was in Derby in 1650 he was moved of the Lord to go to lecture and when the preacher, who was a colonel, was done, George Fox spoke what the Lord commanded him, and then an officer took him by the hand to the Magistrates. George Fox told them that all their preaching, baptism, and sacrifices, would never sanctify them,and that they were not to dispute about God and Christ but to obey him...Christ had taken away his sin, and in him there is no sin...the preachers could not believe in the possibility of purity this side of the grave so George Fox was committed to Prison in Derby.

Even though Mary Dwyer was told not to return, she persisted in going to Boston Massachusetts three time till she was hung there in 1660, as were three other Friends.

“And if you have Meetings.....to preach the Gospel of Peace, of Life, and of Salvation to them; for the Gospel is to be preached to every Creature; and Christ hath tasted Death for everyone, and died for their sins, that they might come out of Death and sin, and live to Christ, that died for them; who hath enlightened them with the Light which is the Life in himself; and God pours out this Spirit upon all Flesh; that is upon all Men and Women. And the Grace and Favour of God appears to all Men; so that all may believe in his Light, and walk in his Holy Spirit, and receive his Grace, which will teach them to live Godly, and bring them Salvation; so that you may come to see the light of Christ's Glorious Gospel set up”.
1681 Epistle 371

Women were active part of this ministry

Women's ministry was accepted and recognised because of what was spoken by the prophet Joel. Joel 2:28-32 “And it shall be in the last days

God declares, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh: And your sons and daughters will prophesy, and your young men see visions and your old men dream dreams: Yea and on my servants and on handmaidens in those days will I pour forth my spirit and they shall prophesy” which was quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost Acts 2:17. This was seen in the context of there being in Christ neither slave or free.....Male or Female for all are one in Christ Jesus Galatians 3:29 it was seen that Philip had 4 daughters who prophesied Acts 21:8-9 and that the spirit should not be quenched or prophesy despised 1 Thessalonians 5:20, Also mentioned The Hanna the prophetess in Luke 2-36-38 [after Simeon recognised the Lord’s Christ] who spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem And Phoebe and Prisca in Romans 16:1-3, 1Corinthians 16:19 Acts 18:24-26. In Philippians 4:3 help is asked for the women who have laboured side by side with the writer.

George Fox in chapter on subject p77-82 of Gospel Truth Demonstrated published 1704 said “for the light which comes from Christ is the same in the Male and in the Female.” You never read that any of the Prophets or Apostles were against the Daughters who had the Spirit of the Lord poured upon them, but a daughter might prophesy in a church, for let the prophets speak two or three. 1 Corinthians 14:26-33. The apostle said Christ in the male and in the female, and of Christ in the female as well as in the male, is he not the same? And may not the spirit of Christ speak in the female as well as in the male?. For the Light is the same in the Male and in the Female, which comes from Christ, he by whom the world was made, so Christ is one in all and not divided. In 1 Thessalonians 5:20 we are told not to reject prophesy see in context verses 14-23. The rejection of women speaking 1Corinthians14:34- was on basis of old testament law. Galatians 2:21 asks is the Law against the promise of God 1Timothy 2:9-15 also had old testament basis for objection.

From the start of Friends there have been women in ministry Elizabeth Hooton from 1646 till her death in Jamaica 1671, Margaret Fell 1652-

Elizabeth Fletcher who at less than 20 years of age travelled in Ireland

Barbara Blagdown who arrived just as Elizabeth was banished (Barbara later survived shipwreck at Youghal) Anne Wright who went from

Castledermot to see King Charles 2 in London during the persecution of Quaker under his rule. Mary Fisher who went to see the Sultan of Turkey, Mary Dwyer who persistently went to Boston until she was hung there.

William Edmundson was impacted indirectly by ministry of women Friends see p 98

Elizabeth Bathurst in 1669 clearly set out Friends message in “Truth Vindicated”

Free Ministry.

While under the old covenant people were expected to pay tithes to the religious rulers of their day George Fox saw that under the new covenant ministry was to be free as in Matthew 10:8 “ As you go preach saying The kingdom of heaven is at hand, Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor script for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.”

Paul asks in 2 Corinthians 11:7 have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I preached the gospel to you freely?

Appendix 2 – Worship

Gathering in the name of Jesus to worship God in Spirit and Truth

WORSHIP

New Covenant and Testament, in John 4.

- That God is not Worshiped, neither at the mountain of Samaria, nor yet at Jerusalem;

- For the hour cometh and now is, [Mark, now is] that the true worshiper shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father seeks such to Worship him: For God is a Spirit and they that Worship him, must Worship him in Spirit and Truth. - GTD
- And this Spirit and Truth must every Man and Woman feel in their Hearts, by which they may know the God of Truth who is Spirit. And so the Jew inward Worships in his Temple, his Body being the Temple of the Lord. But the Jew inward, in the Spirit in the New Covenant and Testament, and New and Living Way, Sings and Rejoices, and Prays in the Holy Ghost, in their Bodies being Temples of the Holy Ghost. – GTD 1Corinthians 14:15 &24-33 Jude 20
- God pours out his Spirit upon all Flesh, as was prophesied in Joel 2: And the Apostle preached the fulfilling of it, in Acts 2. So that with the Spirit all Flesh might see the Glory of God, and see Christ, who gave himself as a Ransom for them all, and tasted Death for every man. - GTD
- The Holy Ghost, which proceeds from the Father and the Son, leadeth the Servants of God and Christ into all the Truth, and reproveth the World for their Unbelief, and their false Judgements and Unrighteousness. – GTD John 14:26 John 15:26 John 16:7-11
- God pours out of his Spirit upon all Flesh, that by it they might understand the Law of Life, which is in Christ Jesus, to make them free from the Law of Sin and Death. Romans 8:1 - GTD
- “Keep your meetings in the Name of Jesus, and feel him in the midst of you, who is your Life and Salvation; 1670 Epistle 281 Matthew 18:20 1Corinthians 14:24-25
- Dear Friends, In the Name and Power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his Spirit, keep all your Meetings for Worship, and your Meetings for Business, that you may see that all that profess the Light of Christ and his Truth, and hath received it, that they do walk according to Truth, and as becomes the Gospel that the Name of God may not be blasphemed amongst you. 1681 Epistle 371 to Carolina.

So this Worship in the New Covenant and Testament, is a New Worship which Christ Jesus, the Heavenly Spiritual Man, the Second Adam, set up above Sixteen Hundred Years ago ; and then put down and abolished the Worship at the Mountain and the Worship at Jerusalem, - GTD

Old Covenant and Testament,

- The Jews were to appear three times a year at the outward temple, and there Worship the Lord. - GTD
- And there was another place of Worship, where Jacob's well was, at the mountain near Samaria. - GTD
- And the Jew outward, in the Old Covenant and Testament, they Sung and Prayed in the Temple at the Outward Jerusalem. - GTD
- And in the Old Covenant and Testament, God poured out his Spirit upon the House of Israel, that they might serve God in his Law. - GTD
- So that they need not have the Priests Lips Malachi 2:7 of the Old Covenant to preserve their Knowledge, nor the Priest to kill the clean Beasts; and they need not have the clean Beasts to die for them: For Christ, the Lamb without blemish, hath tasted Death for everyman, and died for the Sins of the whole World, and so not only for the Jews. -GTD
- Abolished all these outward Candlesticks, Lamps and Lights in the outward Jews generation and Priesthood also. And in the Generation of Christ in the New Covenant, his Believers, that are gathered in his Name, which are passed from Death to Life, which are his Church; - GTD
- But even until this Day, when Moses is read, the Veil is over their hearts, saith the Apostle, to wit, the Jews and other Jewish minded people ; for while Moses is read, and in reading the Old Testament, it keeps the Veil upon them; then what do they, that not only read it, but practice many things in the Old Testament, and yet will be called Christians of the New Covenant? But doth not the Apostle tell you, The Veil is over their hearts when Moses is read? And the Old Testament and Veil is done away by Christ in his New Testament and new Covenant of Light, Life and Grace. And they that do not believe it, the Veil is over them, and their Glory is no Glory; and they are under the Ministration of Death and Condemnation, and

not under the Ministration of the New Testament and Life; for the Veil remains untaken away in reading the Old Testament; And even to this day, whilst Moses is read, the Veil is over their hearts, as the Apostle saith 2 Corinthians 3:12-15. – GTD See 39 Articles p67

Appendix 3 - Refusing to swear oaths

Faithfulness, avoiding deceit. One standard of truth

Swear not at all and let your yes be yes and no be no.

The Lord taught me to be faithful in all things, and to act faithful in two ways, viz inwardly towards God and outwardly to man; and to keep yea and nay in all things. For the Lord showed me, though the people of the world have mouths full of deceit and changeable words, I was to keep yea and nay in all things and that my words should be few and savoury, seasoned with grace. First Page George Fox Journal. Luke 16:10-11 2 Tim 2:2 1 John 2:10

Swearing

In 1664 George Middleton said, “Bring the book and put the oath of Allegiance and Supremacy to him”...So George Fox asked if he had taken the Oath of supremacy himself: who was a swearer and we could not swear at all because Christ forbade it and the Apostle Matthew 5:33-34, James 5:12.....so he was committed till the Court Sessionsthen I said “You have given me a book to kiss and to swear on and the book says “Kiss the son” and the Son says, Swear not at all”: and likewise the Apostle James”. And as George was turning them to the places and holding up the Bible and telling them that I said as the book said ‘Christ said ye should not swear at all’, I wondered the Bible was at liberty and how chance they did not imprison the book, for it and Christ forbid swearing.....

And in the Old Covenant and Testament and Old Way the Jews were to swear, and to perform their Oaths unto the Lord; and not to Swear Falsely.

But in the New Covenant and Testament, and New and Living Way Christ the Son of God saith, Swear not at all, but let your Yea be Yea and your

Nay Nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of Evil. Matthew 5:33-34, James 5:12

And the Apostle James in the New Covenant, in his general Epistle saith, Above all things, [Mark above all things] my Brethren Swear Not etc. So these are Brethren in the New Covenant and Testament, and New and Living Way that are not to Swear at all. And Further he Saith, They are not to Swear by Heaven nor by Earth, nor any other Oath, but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, lest ye fall into Condemnation.

So it is clear, the Command in the Old Covenant and Testament which Christ calls the Old Time, in which they were not to Forswear themselves, but to perform their Oath to the Lord, so they did not go into Evil and Condemnation that did Swear truly, and perform their Oaths to the Lord in the Old Time and Old Covenant: For Christ, who is the Oath of God, he fulfils the Oaths of the Old, and takes away and abolishes the Oaths of the Old Covenant, sets up Yea and Nay instead of them.

And now, if you should object, That Abraham, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses, and the Prophets, and the Angels swore: Christ the Son of God is greater than Moses; who said, Before Abraham was, I am; and he reigns over the House of Joseph and Jacob, and fulfils the Prophets; and he saith, Swear not at all: and Christ the great Prophet, whom God had raised up, is to be heard in all things.

And as for the Angel's Swearing, it is said, I bring forth my first begotten into the World, let all the Angels worship him, to wit, the Son of God who saith, Swear not at all; This is my beloved Son, saith God hear ye him.

And in the Old Testament it is said, "That unto me every knee shall Bow and every Tongue, shall Swear" Isaiah 45:23KJV, saith the Lord, in the Old Covenant and Testament But in the New Covenant and Testament, the Apostle Quotes Isaiah, and Saith, Every Knee shall bow and every Tongue shall confess to God Romans. 14:10

So here it is clear, that Swearing was allowed in old Covenant and old Time, but confessing in the new Covenant and new Time.

And it is manifest that Christ hath taken away all Swearing in his new Testament and Covenant: For all swearing hath been since man fell from

the image of God; and Christ renews Man and Woman up into the Image of God again, and sets up Yea, Yea and Nay, Nay, instead of an Oath.

And Christ sets up in his New Covenant instead of Swearing, True Witness bearing; and that in the mouth of two or three Witnesses everything shall be established: He doth not say, that in the mouth of two or three swearers everything shall be established.

And the Apostle saith, Let everyman speak the Truth to his Neighbour; Ephesians 4:25 which speaking Truth is set up by Christ and his Apostles instead of Swearing, which was commanded in the old time, and under the old Covenant and Testament, which in the Law commanded people to Swear, which Oath was to end the Controversy and Strife among men, which served until Christ the seed came. But when Christ came, he abolished the Law that commanded Swearing, and Swearing also.

And is not Swearing truly by the Lord a work of the Law, which the Law commanded, by which they ended the difference amongst men in the old Time of the Law? And so none of these are Works of the Gospel or Works of Faith in the time of the new Testament and Covenant which prohibited all Swearing, and saith, Men must not Swear at all, or take any Oath; but their Yea must be Yea, and their Nay, Nay, least they go into Evil, and so into Condemnation. James 5:12 Mark 7:6 Matthew 15:8

And so the Law commanded Swearing; but the Gospel, and New Covenant, and Testament commands every man to speak Truth to his Neighbour; and in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every word should be established. Ephesians 4:22-25

Appendix 4 - Refusing to serve in army or fight

Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you. Carnal weapons, permitted under old covenant, no longer allowed.

Returning to George fox in Derby Gaol:

Just as George Fox's six-month sentence in the house of correction was due to end, the battle at Worcester also approached. The house of correction was filled with persons that they had taken up to be soldiers, and then they wanted George Fox to be their Captain, and go forth to Worcester to fight,

and the soldiers cried that they would have none but Him. So the keeper of the house of correction was commanded to bring George up before the commissioners and soldiers in the market place, and there they professed Georges' preferment because of his virtues as they said with many other compliments. They asked George if he would not take up arms for the Commonwealth against the King.

George told them that he lived in the life and power that took away the occasion of all wars, and he knew from whence all wars did arise - from the lust according to James' doctrine. James 4:1

They still courted George to accept their offer, and George says, "They thought that I did but compliment them, but I told them I was come into a covenant of peace which was before wars and strife's. They said their offer was made in love and kindness to me because of 'Georges' virtues etc. I told them if the offer was made in love and kindness, I trample it under my feet".

They then told the gaoler to take George away and cast him into the dungeon amongst rogues and felons. George was put in the dungeon amongst 30 felons in a lousy stinking place without any bed; where they kept him almost half a year although sometimes they would let George walk in the garden for they had a belief in him that he would not go away. Taken from Sewel's account in George Fox Formative years

The Jews in the Old Covenant and Testament, and in their old Way, had outward Helmets, Shields, and Swords and Carnal Weapons, and Armour. But Christ in his New Covenant and Testament who is the New and Living Way, he saith, He had not come to destroy men's Lives but to Save them. Though he was King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, yet he was far off from giving any Precept or Command to his Disciples to destroy Men's Lives: When some would have had Fire to come down from Heaven, to consume them that would not receive him; he turned about, and rebuked them and said, He came not to destroy Men's lives, but to save them. Luke 9:56 (Peshitta translation but to give them life)

And such Men as would have been plucking up the Tares, Christ the King of Kings would give them no Commission, no not so much as a License; but said, Let the Wheat and the Tares grow together till the Harvest, which

was the End of the World; and then his Father would send forth his Angels which should be the Reapers, and they should sever the wheat from the Tares, etc And Christ gave a Reason, wherefore he would not give a Commission to Men to pluck up the Tares, Lest they in their blind Zeal should pluck up the Wheat also with the Tares.

And so Christ in his New Testament and New Covenant, who sent forth his twelve Disciples, and after his Seventy to preach the Gospel he did not sent them out with any Carnal Weapons 2 Corinthians 10:4 or Armour, or any Carnal Set-maintenance or Tithes, as was in the Old Covenant; nay, they were not so much as to take a Bag or Staff to defend them.

So the King of Kings was far off from giving them a Commission or Licenses, to beat People into his Religion, Way and Worship, Church or Belief with Carnal Weapons: but saith, He that believes is saved; and he that doth not, is condemned already; and that was Punishment enough. And therefore the Apostle Paul saith, The Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal, but Spiritual: Mark, Spiritual, in the New Covenant and New Testament, and New and Living Way; but Carnal in the Old Covenant and Old Testament to the outward Jews in the Old Way.

And in another place the Apostle tells the Saints in the New Covenant, That the Weapons and Armour were a Shield of Faith, which is the Gift of God, which Christ is the Author and Finisher of, that Saves Men's Lives, and the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; and the Helmet of Salvation, that preserved their Head; and the Breast plate of Righteousness, that kept Evil out of their Breast and Hearts; and their Loins were to be girth with Truth; and to be shod with the Preparation of the Everlasting Gospel of Peace. Ephesians 6:16-17

And these are Christ's Ministers of the Spirit, and Believers, and true Christians, that stand in this Armour, and have these Weapons, and follow Christ, and fight under his banner of Love, with his spiritual Armour and Weapons, in his New and Living Way, and New Testament, and New Covenant of Grace and Light, and follow not the Jews in their Carnal Armour and Weapons, and signs and Shadows; but Christ is come and hath abolished them.

And so it is clear, that the New Covenant and Testament, and New and Living Way is not according to the Jews Old Covenant and Testament and Old Way, which served until the Seed, Christ, Came. All those Signs and Shadows in the Old Covenant, (upheld with their Outward Weapons and Carnal Armour), have done their Service to hold up their Signs and Shadows; but Christ is come and hath abolished them.

Old Testament - kill Blasphemers and Sabbath-breakers, and to Stone them to Death, or put to death with outward Weapons about Religion is a work of the Law, and not of the New Covenant and New Testament. For Christ though his Name was blasphemed, and the Apostles and their Doctrine and Teaching blasphemed and evil spoken of; yet he the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and his great Apostles did not command, nor put any to Death with Carnal Weapons: But Christ said, They that Blasphemed against the Son of Man, it might be forgiven; but they that Blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, were not to be forgiven Matthew 12:31, neither in this World, nor in the World to come; which was punishment enough. And further he said in the New Covenant and his Gospel-day, He came not to destroy Men's lives but to save them. Luke 9:56 (Peshitta translation but to give them life)

So all they that wrestle with Flesh and Blood, and with Carnal Weapons about Religion, it is a Work of the Law, and the old Testament, and not a work of the New Testament and New Covenant.

For the Apostle said, "Their War-fare was Spiritual, and their Weapons were Spiritual, and not carnal, and they did not wrestle with the Flesh and Blood, but with Spiritual Wickedness and Rulers of Darkness. 2 Corinthians 10:4

So the Apostles were of Faith in the New Covenant and Testament and not of the Law - wrestling with the Works and Weapons of the Old Testament: And the Law was added because of Transgression, and served till the Seed Christ came, who redeems from under the Law, Christ Jesus, by whom the World was made: So Christ was before man fell into Transgression, by reason of which the Law was added, and served until the Seed came, which Seed is Christ, who doth fulfil the Promises and the Law, and so redeems

his People from under the works of the Law , and from under the Curse.
Galatians 3:10-13

And the Apostle saith, that the Law is fulfilled in one Word, even in this, to love thy Neighbour as thyself: And if you are led by the Spirit of God, ye are not under the Law, etc Galatians 5. For I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live unto God, Galatians 2 And they that Love one another, fulfil the Law, Romans 13:8 Galatians 5:4.”

But in the New Covenant and New Testament which is not according to the old, Christ saith, “Love your Enemies, and bless them that curse you, and do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you, that you may be children of your Father who is in Heaven”. He makes the Sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends his rain on the unjust, as well as the just. Matthew 5:43-45

And this is Christ’s Doctrine in the New Covenant. And the Apostle saith, Being Reviled we Bless, being Persecuted we Rejoice, 1 Corinthians 4:12-13

And again the Apostle saith, “Bless them that persecute you; bless and curse not”. So though they were to bless and curse in the Old Covenant yet in the New Covenant they are to Bless, and not Curse, as in Romans 12:14.

It is clear - the Practice of the New Covenant and Testament is not according to the Old.

And in the Old Covenant it said, An Eye for an Eye and a Tooth for a Tooth. Matthew 5:38-39 But Christ in his New Covenant and Testament saith, “Whosoever smites thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also”. Once more it is clear - the New Covenant’s practice is not according to the Old.

IN 1660 GEORGE FOX AND OTHER QUAKERS WROTE TO KING CHARLES 2ND AT THE TIME OF FIFTH MONARCHY MEN RISING AGAINST THE KING.

“Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace, and ensue it, and to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God,

seeking the good and the welfare, and doing that which tends to the peace of all. All bloody principles and practices we do utterly deny, with all outward wars, and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever, and this is our testimony to the whole world.

That spirit of Christ by which we are guided is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil, and again to move unto it; and we do certainly know, and so testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ which leads us into all Truth will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world.

And as for the kingdoms of this world, we cannot covet them, much less can we fight for them, but we do earnestly desire and wait, that by the word of God's power and its effectual operation in the hearts of men the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, that he might rule and reign in men by his spirit and truth, that thereby all people, out of all different judgements and professions might be brought into love and unity with God and one another, and that they might all come to witness the prophet's words, who said, 'Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.'" (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3)

Extract from Declaration to Charles II, 1660

Appendix 5 - Refusing to pay tithes

“Freely you have received freely give”. Old Covenant with it tithes to support priesthood replaced by Gospel of the kingdom

Free Ministry

That the message was free was a frequent feature of George Fox's teaching. On a quick read of George Fox's Journal for 1656 and 1660 I got 14 references to “free teacher”.

“And Christ saith in the New Covenant and Testament to the Followers and Learners of him, ‘freely you have received, freely give’ : and bid them, go without a bag or staff Luke 9:3: and into what city or town they came, they

were to enquire, ‘Who is worthy?’ Matthew 10:11 They were to eat such things as was set before them Luke 10:8: for the work, man was worthy of his meat. So the New Covenant is, ‘freely you have received, freely give’; and they need neither Bag nor Staff, for Christ the great Prophet and Priest will supply and uphold them.

This Christ Spake before he was offered; for before he was offered up he bid the People, whom he had cleansed, Go and offer a Sacrifice to the Priest for their cleansing. Before he was offered up, he told them, they ought to pay tithes and mint and anise to the Priest, etc., but when he had offered himself once and for all the Offerings, he put down all the Priests and their Offerings; and sent his Disciples into the Nations to Preach the Gospel: And then he did not bid them go and hear the Scribes and Pharisees, that sat in Moses’ Chair, and go to the Priests for their Cleansing, and give them their tithes, but by the offering up himself once for all, he had ended the Priests and their Services, and the Old Covenant and its Works. [Mark, An Offering once for All, for the Sins of the whole World.] Then there was no need of Priests in the Old Law, to offer Lambs and Rams, etc But the Priest, in the Old Covenant - his Works were finished; and his Wages and Salary, his Tithes and Offerings were taken away also. So he took away the first, Old Covenant Testament and Priesthood, and established the Second. So Tithes in the Old Covenant and Testament to the Priests we grant; but Christ hath abolished both it and them. For the New Covenant is not according to the Old; in which Christ saith, “Freely you have received, freely give.”

“Likewise are not Tithes, Tenths, First-Fruits and Offerings (which were given to the Priests), works of the Law, though now they do not all the Priest’s Work under the Law? ... some of the Priests now have Lots of Land also, contrary to the Law of the Old Covenant.

And is it not setting up Lights and Candles in Temples Works of the Law and Priests-under the Law, though they do not burn Incense like them?

And the Apostles in the Gospel-time and New Covenant (to whom Christ said, “Freely you have received, freely give”) did not go in distinct Garments from other People; for Peter had his Fishers Coat John 21:7, after

Christ was risen: And Paul bid them bring his Cloak, which he had left at Troas² Timothy 4:13, etc.

So the Apostle saith, and tells them plainly; As many as are under the works of the Law, are under the Curse. And if ye do some things of the Law, and not continue in all the things written in the book of the Law, ye are cursed; and no man is justified by the Law in the Sight of God. And the Law is not of Faith, which the Just do live by; for God doth justify the Heathen through their Faith; and they are justified by the Faith which Christ is Author of: For by the Works of the Law no Flesh Shall be Justified, Galatians 2:10

And the Priest's Pulpits is a work of the Law; for Ezra had his Pulpit to read the Law, in the time of the Law and the Old Covenant; and the Tenth of the Increase, with the Tithes and Offerings were a work of the Law, not a work of the Gospel; for Christ said to his Gospel Ministers, Freely you received Freely give Matthew 10:8

Appendix 6 –Similar Respect for All

Treating rich and powerful the same as others: Same language to both and refusal to remove hats.

“A great rage there was amongst professors and priests: for said they, ‘They “thee” and “thou” all people without respect: and will not doff their hats to one nor bow the knee to any man’: this troubled them fearfully: 1656 GFJNSp184..... Many imprisoned 1659 GFJNSp268.”

This was a testimony based on treating all people equally from James 2:1-7; Galatians 2:6; Matthew 22:16; 1Peter 1:17. At the end of George Fox's letter to the Governor of the Barbados, is a section which is not usually included when the letter is printed, possibly because the language used is out of favour. In response to the accusation that Friends were teaching African Slaves to Rebel, the letter reports that Friends had taught them, to be sober; to love their masters and mistresses, to be faithful and diligent in their service and business and then their masters and overseers would love them, and deal kindly with them; also that they should not beat their wives or wives their husbands ; neither should the men have many wives; nor

commit adultery nor fornication, nor give bad words to one another, nor to anyone else:“for there is something in them (African Slaves) that tells them they should not practice these or any other evils”. The Letter then teaches the responsibility of those leading families to pray for and teach their families and that the African Slaves; Native Americans and Tawnies (descendants of Irish and African Slaves) are a great part of the families of the Island that those who are Masters will be accountable for. What George Fox taught has many similarities to Colossians 3:22- 4:1 Coverdale version which George Fox probably read as a young man which included, “Masters do unto your servants what is just and equal and know that ye have a master in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him”. Ephesians 6:5-9 Coverdale

Formation 1 –William Edmundson’s Journey to being a Friend

Introduction

This is an effort to put early part of William Edmundson’s Journal (Chapter 1&2) in briefer more modern language. Some *context added in smaller italics so you know what the editor added from his study of history and Quakers of that time* . (Possible Scriptural references added as end notes).

YOUTH

In 1627, William Edmundson was born the youngest of 6 in Little Musgrove in Westmoreland. His mother, Grace died when he was four and his Father John, who was respected by those who knew him and religious to the best of William’s knowledge, died when William was eight.

William’s care was left to his mother’s brother who took advantage of him and his siblings and made life hard for them, so that most left their Uncle but William, being young, stayed for a number of years. His eldest brother Thomas, who was heir to his father’s estate, left when he was 21 and spent much money in dispute with the Uncle.

APPRENTICED

William was apprenticed to a carpenter and joiner in York where he lived for some years. During that time the Lord began to work in the hearts of many people in that city. There were great “openings” in the things of God in both preachers and hearers. *The King James Bible had become publically available only a few years before in 1611.*

ARMY MAN The Civil war in Britain started in 1642 when William was 15. At this time the Scottish Covenanters allied with the British parliament against the king and set out to bring in Calvinist doctrine, instead of Anglicanism and this resulted in the approval of the Westminster Confession of faith in 1648.

Then William felt visited by the Lord with his judgements, and awareness of his sins set before him, he was very exercised concerning his salvation, also about election and reprobation *strong aspects of Calvinism*. His mind was exercised about religion. He felt crushed and low in spirit when at public worship. The Lord's judgements seized upon him heavily, so much so that on one occasion at public worship he shed abundance of tears in weeping and bewailing his wretched state - so much so that the priest and congregation took notice of him, but none did direct him to the Physician who could heal his wounded spirit.

William joined the Parliament's army and continued in it till the war was over (*King Charles 1 was defeated and beheaded early in 1649*). William went to Scotland with Oliver Cromwell in 1650. The Lord began afresh with William and many times he was brought low in consideration of the state he lived in, and what his end would be. Sometimes the Lord's mercies refreshed his heart and caused tears of joy and gladness. He knew not the secret hand that was dealing with him, and no one informed him, even though there were High Professors of religion in the army. At night William considered the narrow escape and dangers of the day and what would become of his soul, if he had fallen in uncertainty of his future happiness. These thoughts caused him to resolve to amend his life, but when presented with opportunities his vanity overcame his resolve.

In 1651 the Royalist army marched south to Worcester and the Parliament's army followed and defeated them there. After the fight William was troubled in mind for his vanity for he made merry over God's witness in his conscience, which testified against him. From there he was commanded to the Isle of Man and after victory there was quartered in Chesterfield Derbyshire.

HEARS OF QUAKERS

Reports of Quakers were the talk of the town - the priests being angry towards them, and many strange stories were told of them. Yet the more William heard, the more he was attracted to them.

One market day after two Quaker women talked of the things of God to the people in the market, the priest of the town came into the tavern where William was and abused the women and boasted of what he had done. A young merchant hearing the priest boast of his abusive behaviour said it was a poor victory he had got over the women, at which the priest was angry and began to storm. William's spirit rose against the priest and he started from his seat, and he asked the priest and those with him if they came to quarrel, and that if they did, they should have enough! The priest answered, "No, not with you sir". William asked them to leave the room which they shortly did. (William must have had quite a presence age 24!) The more William heard of the Quakers, the more he loved them and earnest desires arose that the Lord would show him the way of truth.

William's regiment marched for Scotland and on the way he had charge of recruiting men and bringing them to their companies there. He then left the Army and returned to Derbyshire and got married.

IRELAND

William's brother who was a soldier in Ireland highly recommended Ireland and persuaded William to go and live there which he concluded to do with his wife. Not long after William his wife and servant with a quantity of merchant goods went to Ireland - sailing from Whitehaven to Dublin. His brother was not where he expected, and William thought of settling in Dublin where trade was brisk, and housing cheap after the plague. His brother came to Dublin with horses and took him to Antrim where his troop was quartered. There William took a house and his brother stayed with him. The officers of the troop were very kind and wanted William to ride with the troop and receive constant pay, also do his own business and be duty free. William refused and did not accept their kind offers for his inclinations were after religion and his conscience was awakening by the Lord's hand of judgement mixed with mercy.

CONVINCED

Soon William's goods sold out and in 1653 he went to the north of England among his relations for more. At this time, George Fox and James Naylor were there. With his brother Thomas and another relative, William went three miles to hear James Naylor. All three were convinced of the Lord's blessed truth: William wrote *"God's witness in our hearts⁵⁴ answered the truth of what was spoken, and the Lord's former dealings with me came fresh into my remembrance. Then I knew it was the Lord's hand that had been striving with me for a long time"*.

William's understanding was opened - many Scriptures were brought to his remembrance, which he had often read but not understood. Now the Lord's spirit manifested in his heart⁵⁵, which had often reproved him for evil in his ignorance *of why it was evil*, William now knew it was the truth which led into all truth⁵⁶. Agreeable to the Holy Scriptures of the law and the prophets, Christ and his apostles. *Jesus Christ the way; the truth; the life⁵⁷, in whom was life and that life light for all people⁵⁸ - the Word of God⁵⁹ who became flesh. While, in times past, God had spoken by the prophets, he had now spoken through his Son⁶⁰. The Law had come through Moses; grace and truth now came through Jesus. Jesus taught the new and living way God had planned⁶¹. Early Friends set out to live as friends of Jesus by doing what he taught⁶². They realized that Jesus had replaced some of the accepted ideals of that time⁶³. Like other early Quakers, William chose to follow Jesus's teaching where it differed from what went before.⁶⁴ It became so clear to William that he thought all who heard it should own it. A few days later the Lord's power seized William and he was greatly exercised in spirit, the Lord's hand was mighty upon him, in judgements*

⁵⁴ John 14:26

⁵⁵ John 16:7-11

⁵⁶ John 16:13-15

⁵⁷ John 14:6

⁵⁸ John 1:4,5 &9

⁵⁹ John 1:1 & 14

⁶⁰ Hebrews 1:1-2

⁶¹ Hebrews 10:20

⁶² John 15:12-15

⁶³ Luke 16:16

⁶⁴ But I say to you sayings of Jesus in Sermon on Mount Matthew 5,

6, 7 Luke 6 John 4:23-24. Most other professed Christians continued Old Testament ways.

mixed with mercy... William wrote *“I loved the Lord’s judgements, for I knew that I had sinned against him and must be purged through judgement”*

LIVES and stops lying and refuses to swear

William did his business in England and shipped his goods to be landed at Carrickfergus or Belfast.

While on the sea William’s mind argued strongly to save the duty on his goods; why not get help from the troop his brother was with (for they would have helped him night or day), but his awakened conscience argued for truth, justice and equity; *as taught by Jesus*. There was a great contest between conscience and self, and in this conflict many Scriptures were opened to his understanding, that duties and customs ought to be paid; and though “self” struggled hard for mastery, yet at last was overthrown and the judgement of truth prevailed.

William borrowed a horse and when his brother met him with usual compliments, the Lord’s power was so much on William *such a reality of the presence of God* that he could not respond in the usual way. His brother was amazed and went in and sat down silent. William was so much broken⁶⁵ in the power of the Lord before his brother and his wife that his brother made no opposition but received the truth and joined with it.

On William’s return to Carrickfergus to get his goods’ the officers required an oath to the truth of the bill of contents of his parcels, and would not allow them ashore without it - wanting to seize William’s goods. William told them that he could not swear as it was contrary to Christ’s command⁶⁶. This appeared strange to them as they had never met the like before. The Lord’s truth and testimony were precious to William so he persevered and after some time and with much difficulty he got an order to bring goods into the custom house. William’s stand was a wonder to the officers and others and caused much discussion. Rumours spread

⁶⁵ I wonder if William apologised to his wife and brother at this time Matthew 5:23

⁶⁶ Matthew 5:33-37

regarding William and Quakers. *Clearly William's commitment was a commitment to live the teachings of Jesus, not just to profess a set of doctrines.*

When William returned home with his goods, day and night he faced a great conflict between flesh and spirit⁶⁷, *William's desire in coming to Ireland, had been to profit from trading. This was why he wanted first to live near Waterford, then in Dublin and now he was being challenged to live in a less profitable way, guided by principles* and was much cast down with sorrow and trouble of mind, but none understood or gave him a word to comfort or eased him. William would have gone far to find an experienced friend. His sleep departed and many times in great trouble of mind he cried and wept wishing for the day, and when day came his sorrows remained and he wished for the night. He had none that understood to speak with and rumour of his condition spread among professors *(of religion)* who came to gaze on him and jeering contend against truth, and say that he was bewitched and going mad.

TEMPORARY SOLUTION

A Major Miles Blusfield who was a great talker of religion and with whom George Fox had stayed and who had been somewhat convinced of the truth but left it, came to Ireland. Hearing of the exercise William was in, he came to see him. Initially, as William was away Blusfield spoke to William's wife and spoke well of Quakers and their principles and appeared glad to have found a companion like William. On hearing this from his wife William rode twelve miles on horseback to see him. The man spoke much of religion, of his knowledge of God and Christ and appreciation of George Fox and James Naylor. William listened in silence intent on hearing him for William was cast down and poor and low spirit yet glad to meet a man with such a knowledge of the things of God to advise him in his great troubles of a wounded spirit. Miles Blusfield then advised William to be cheerful and merry, and not to look to those inward troubles, that bowed him down, he said these were the enemies' work to lead me into despair and destroy me by swallowing me up in so much

⁶⁷ Romans 8:1-8

trouble. He said that God had a love for me to make me a chosen vessel of mercy and that God would love me to the end and that nothing in me could hinder God's love or frustrate God's will.

Miles' doctrine which was without the cross of Christ or self-denial⁶⁸, answered William's will and carnal desires. William loved the truth which he was convinced of and desired to have it together with his carnalities, fleshly liberties, worldly pleasures and profits. So when the Lord's power faced him with the Cross, William reasoned with the arguments Miles Blusfield had given him and so got from under judgement. The easing these ideas brought to William and slight apparent healing lasted only about a week. For the Lord did not leave William; his merciful hand preserved him and his power took fresh hold of him, bowing him under his judgements and opening the eyes of his understanding and plainly showed William that there was alive in him that which was opposed to the will of God that needed to be crucified. William saw that Miles' slight cure was all marred and that now he had none to trust in but the Lord, for counsel and information, whose care for William had been manifested in his preservation, redemption, and information through many deep afflictions and temptations, and much opposition. "I" William wrote, "was weak, but the Lord's strength was perfect in weakness⁶⁹, and his Spirit and power increased in me through obedience to the cross of Christ, wherein I was daily exercised, and thereby grew into acquaintance⁷⁰ with the Lord's work to make me a vessel for his purpose."

WATCHED

Those professing religion watched William closely hoping to get occasion against him and the principles of truth he professed, but the Lord strengthened him to watch his words and deeds, and so cut off occasion against him.

⁶⁸ Luke 9:23-27

⁶⁹ 2 Corinthians 12:9

⁷⁰ Romans 8: 12-17

At that time the use of true and plain and proper speech as thee and thou to a single person and keeping on the hat were strange things for people, *this was because common practice at the time was to use plural to those who were more important and singular to those of less importance also to take off the hat to those above and not to those below in society*⁷¹ and few would accept them being used and instead would react with abusive words, sometimes with blows and stone throwing. The keeping of one price in selling goods, and not reducing the asking price was stumbling block for most people and kept them back from buying until they saw the justice of the system. It was a rough and rugged world and the cross of Christ was foolishness⁷² and a stumbling block to many.

William's trials within and without were of many sorts, many beyond what he could express. He loved the Lord's judgements and was willing to wait upon the Lord to know them - indeed when the Lord's hand seemed easy he was afraid lest the Lord withdraw his hand. He desired to be searched thoroughly, for the Lord's judgements had become sweet to his taste, for they were many times mixed with springs of mercy to his joy and comfort⁷³. He was presented with opportunities to get rich both by trading and leasing or buying land, but business in the affairs of the world began to trouble him.

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

William's brother also having been convinced of the truth met together with his wife twice a week in his home and after a while four more were convinced and they also met together to wait upon God⁷⁴ and worship him in spirit and truth. The Lords mercy and goodness often comforting and confirming the blessed truth in their hearts⁷⁵. *Waiting Worship, in spirit and truth was just one aspect of desiring to do what Jesus had taught. Silent worship was not the source, it was his Lord's wisdom mercy and goodness.*

⁷¹ James 2:1-6

⁷² 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

⁷³ Galatians 5:22

⁷⁴ Isaiah 40:31

⁷⁵ John 16:13-15

Formation 2 THOMAS WILSON COMING AMONG FRIENDS

Now his heart was opened, and he felt the Lord's fierce anger because of sin; and he was made willing to love and dwell under his righteous judgments, being truly convinced that was the way to come unto the mercy seat. He saw he was to cease from the doctrines of men, and mind the gift which was in him; and sit- down among Friends in their silent meetings, to wait on the Lord in retiredness of mind, for His heavenly teachings and holy leadings; in the performance of which inward, divine, and heavenly worship, he with many more young people, was convinced of the inward work of God, and turned to the Lord with all their hearts. Those who attended this meeting from time to time, became very tender and heavenly minded, and in great love with each other: the heart-tendering power of the Lord being renewedly felt, inwardly revealed, when no words were spoken.

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Thomas Wilson of Cumberland and Edenderry Ireland – 1725

Formation 3 Francis Howgill

What Francis Howgill heard on Firbank Fell

Writing for book that was printed in 1655 Francis Howgill recorded that as soon as he heard, George Fox “declare, **That the light of Christ in Man was the way to Christ**, I believed the eternal word of truth, **and that of God in my Conscience sealed it;**⁷⁶”

To understand what he meant by the Light of Christ he also wrote about the same time. “I am bold in the name of the Lord, to declare to you, and unto all the world , that Christ is the true Light that, that enlightens every one that is come into the world, and this light is spiritual, and not natural and it convinces of sin, and turns minds towards God, and it shines in Darkness”; ...for the Scriptures witness to same, and Christ bears witness of it; and **no other light do we own but the same as ever was, which was in the beginning, and which convinced the world of sin**⁷⁷,

Francis Howgill was 32 years old when in 1652 he heard “That the light of Christ in Man was the way to Christ,” To appreciate the significance to him of what he heard one has to try and grasp his experiences over the previous 20 years, [The following is Editors paraphrase so if anything does not ring true to you the original published in 1670 is available for consideration.]

Like George Fox Francis had set out to know God which he read about in Scripture, he attended much to reading and meditation and he was sober and serious alone. He began to see many pastimes as vanity which only lasted but for a moment, yet while in folly and wantonness he ran into Transgression and Pleasure, only to be Judged in himself for what he had done. This made him feel weak and resolve in his own will not to do them

⁷⁶ Page 18 Photo 5648

again, but after a while back in the same company he again did what he saw to be vanity , and soon was checked for many things.

CONSCIENCE

Then Francis opposed the fellows he had walked with in wantonness so they reviled, hated and scorned him. He often prayed words 3 or 4 times a day, but knew not God, imagining God at a distance. He grew in knowledge and became puffed up and admired by the World, while the root of iniquity grew in him, and he still felt condemned for words and actions. His heart showed him that it was corrupt but when he kept within the light of conscience he refrained from many actions, and he experienced great joy with in him. But a ‘teacher’ (*possibly teacher at University Francis attended*) said that it was a natural conscience that kept Francis from sin, whereas the ‘teacher’ claimed he had restraining grace. So Francis listened to the ‘teachers’ imagination and slighted the light that had preserved him out of gross evils and instead harkened to the idea that the saint had peculiar Faith and Grace.

Francis was taught how the saints believed in Christ, and so sin was not imputed to them, but Christ’s righteousness was accounted to them, He was told to seek the means, as prayer and receiving the sacrament. But Francis was in great fear that he should eat unworthily. Francis was told to believe Christ suffered for him. While Francis believed all that they called faith, he could not see Christ died for him and had taken away his sin for the witness of his conscience⁷⁸ told him, he was a servant of sin⁷⁹, while he committed it. Francis was told he must not omit an ordinance as thereby faith is confirmed and strength added. Yet Francis saw that scripture said that he who eats unworthily eats damnation⁸⁰ to himself.... And great fear

⁷⁷ Work of the Councilor John 16:7-8 the spirit of Truth John 15:26 the Holy Spirit John 14:26

⁷⁸ John 8:9 Romans 2:15

⁷⁹ Romans 6:16

⁸⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:29 KJV

fell upon him that he had sinned against the Holy Ghost, and he was deeply troubled by this. The 'teacher' said he had not come prepared, even though he had prepared as advised, So he concluding that these were 'teachers' without value.

Francis fasted and prayed, walked in sorrow and thought none tempted on every hand like him....so he ran to this person and that, they offered promises that were only words, for the witness of Christ showed him The root of iniquity and body of sin stood, and he questioned all he ever had, which the 'teachers' said was Grace Repentance and Faith.

Francis told the 'teachers' that there was guilt in him and the 'teachers' said Sin was taken away by Christ, but the guilt should remain while he lived. Francis said to himself that this was a miserable salvation that the guilt and condemnation he felt should stand. So Francis felt tossed around and heard confusion preached. So he said "surely this is not the ministry of Christ."

So Francis stayed home and wept in deserted places as everything he had done was laid before him, every thought judged, he was tender and his heart broken. When he sorrowed most he had most peace, for something spoke within him from the Lord, even though he did not know the Lord then.

'Teachers' were saying that only the letter was available in those times and it was heresy to look for the word of the Lord to be spoken now yet often he was made to do many righteous things by the immediate Power and Word of God, and then peace and joy sprung up in him, and Promises were spoken, That the Lord would teach the people himself⁸¹, and be my God; and often he did obey contrary to his will, and denied his will; The 'teachers' told him that this was slavery to obey out of fear, and there was

⁸¹ Hebrews 8 :8-12 Jeremiah 31:33

what teachers called Evangelical Obedience and so Francis got above his fear and acted what they called Ordinances, and the 'teachers' called this Son like obedience, and Christ had done it all.

Then Francis appreciated the Independents, loved them and joined himself to them and spent all the money he could get purchasing books. He walked with them and owned them as more separate from the World. The Independents pressed for separation, but in time Francis saw it was only words, that they chose their members as officers and made themselves an image and fell down to it. While at first there was some tenderness in them the doctrine was the same outward words.

Then the Anabaptists appeared to have more Glory, and walk more according to Scripture, outwardly observing what was written and Francis went along with them and there was something he loved about them, but they denied all those who did not follow them as out of fellowship with the saints and the doctrine of Christ. So Francis saw they had the same ground and their doctrine out of the Life. The Anabaptists had separated themselves, and made another likeness, but still all said, the Letter was the word and rule, and Christ without at a distance, had done all; some of them holding free-will, others opposing⁸².

Francis loved those that walked honestly among them and owned much that he heard but could not accept the outward they required before allowing communion. He was concerned that he saw honest hearted people resting in no more than a reed of Egypt, and he found no peace or Guide. Some preached the doctrine of free grace (as they called it) 'that all sin was done away, past present and to come, and so preached salvation to the first nature, and to the serpent that bore Rule, Believe this and all is finished; Francis harkened a little to this and so lost his

⁸² Editors take on this is that Francis was here exposing division among Anabaptists, "Opposing" free will, meaning holding that people predestined to heaven or hell

condition within as whither he went, this was spoken in him, **His servant thou art to whom thou obeys;**⁸³ **and so being overcome by sin, I had no justification witnessed in me, but condemnation.**

Then Francis heard some preaching Christ within, but it was just words for they themselves were without. They said all must be within (the desire of Francis Heart) they spoke of redemption, justification all within and God appearing in man and overcoming the power of the devil. Francis Conscience bore witness that this must be so and something breathed within him after the living God; and he had true Love to all that walked honestly in what profession so ever, and Francis hated reviling one another, and with the sufferer he always took part; but still he saw, that though they spoke of all things within, and a power to come, that they enjoyed not what they spoke, for the same Fruits were brought forth: till at last, he saw none walked as the ministers of Christ, nor none pretended to the ministry had any such gift, nor pastor, nor teacher, nor any such members as were in the apostles time:

So at last, having passed up and down, hurried here and there, He saw all the teachers of the world, that they sought themselves, and fed poor people with dead Names and Deceit, and they were not the ministry of Christ; and so He saw them all in deceit, who did not abide in Christ's doctrine; and He got myself quit of most of them; for ever as he dissented from their judgement, they hated and persecuted him.

So at last there was something revealed in Francis, that the Lord would teach his people himself; and so he waited, and many things opened in him of a time at hand; Sometimes he would hear a priest, and be was moved by the Lord, and his word in Francis spoke to oppose, and often as a fire I burned, and a trembling fell upon him, yet he feared reproach, and

⁸³ Rom 6:16

so denied the Lord's Motion; and it was revealed in Francis to wait, and he should know the Lord's counsel; and the word of the Lord was in him, Revealed that the time was at hand, when the dead should hear the voice of the son of God; and the thought burned in him as fire, that the day was near, when it should not be, lo here, nor there, but all his people should be taught of the Lord. But Francis ran out, into carelessness, for he knew not the Cross of Christ; yet still he had ever, as his Mind was turned to the Light, pure openings and Prophecies to come, and a belief that he should see the day, and should bear Witness to his name;

So Francis went up and down, preaching against all the Ministry, and also ran out with what was revealed to himself, and preached up and down the country of the fullness that was in the old Bottle, and so was wondered after, and admired by many, who had waded up and down as he had. And They fed one another with words, and healed up one another with deceit, and all laid down in sorrow when the Day of the Lord was made manifest; for he was overthrown and the foundation swept away, and all his righteousness and unrighteousness was all judged and weighed, and all was found too light.

And immediately, as soon as Francis heard on Firbank Fell George Fox⁸⁴ one declare, **That the light of Christ in Man was the way to Christ**, I believed the eternal word of truth, and that of God in my Conscience sealed it;

In other writing from the same period Francis Howgill described the Light of Christ as follows

"For the Light of Jesus Christ is spiritual, which appears and declares against all Sects, and opinions and blasphemies. And all you that hate it, are in contention, and in opinions, and blaspheme the truth: and I charge it

⁸⁴ Not said in so specifically in book.

upon you in the presence of the living God, that you are blasphemers **who call the light natural** and paganism; and the Lord will plead with you, you filthy corrupt minds, who call the light of Christ Anti-christian ; for here in the presence of the Lord of hosts., I speak it, and no other light do we own to walk by, but that which is spiritual and eternal, the Light of Christ, which he hath enlightened everyone that come in to the World⁸⁵ withal; and this is not Anti-spiritual as thou calls it; for the Scriptures witness to same, and Christ bears witness of it; and no other light do we own but the same as ever was, which was in the beginning, and which convinced the world of sin⁸⁶, and you that call this Paganism and Heretical, and Blasphemous and Anti-Christian; let all who have any light in them judge and let shame cover your faces, and fear take hold of you; for your words stink, and come out of the mouth of the dragon, ye filthy unclean Frogs, which have poison under your tongues. And as for the Books which we have printed, we own them, and are ready to lay down our lives for the Testimony of Jesus and the truth of them, and seal them with our blood, and what are written in them, through the eternal Power of God, which is made manifest, from whence it did arise and proceed, and your shame and nakedness and envy appears

But I am bold in the name of the Lord, to declare to you, and unto all the world , that Christ is the true Light that, that enlightens every one that is come into the world, and this light is spiritual, and not natural and it convinces of sin, and turns minds towards God, and it shines in Darkness; but you dark children know it not; yea, you that hate it have it, And it shall condemn you, and when the book of conscience shall be opened, you shall be judged for all your hard speeches against the truth⁸⁷”

⁸⁵ John 1:9

⁸⁶ Work of the Counsellor John 16:7-8 the spirit of Truth John 15:26 the Holy Spirit John 14:26

⁸⁷ P 20 photo 5650

Formation 4 William Drewsbury

In this section ?? **and red words** indicate that the photograph of old pages could not be clearly read and needs checking

The First Birth

I was conceived in sin, and brought forth in Iniquity, and in that state lived and delighted in pride and pleasures, lightness and vanity, as all do in that nature, until I was eight years of age, though before that time, when I did live in vanity, the Light of my Conscience did witness against me, and caused some trouble in me, but I departed from the light, and so followed the counsel of my own heart, that lead me into vanity, and to live without fear of God: And about the time when I was eight years of Age, of my natural birth; the Word of the Lord came unto me, I created thee for my glory⁸⁸, an account thou must give to me for all thy words⁸⁹ and actions done in the Body, which word enlightened my Heart, and opened the Book of Conscience in me, where all was written I had done in the Body ever since I had any remembrance⁹⁰, and when I had read my condition, how I had lived without God who created me for his glory; The Word of the Lord then came to me, Shall the Axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith, or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? As if the staff should shake itself against him that lifteth it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself as if it were no Wood; and by the power of the Word of the Lord that spoke in me, my understanding was enlightened, and my conscience bore witness, that it was my condition; I had lifted up my self against the living God, in living without his fear, who created me to live in obedience to him, but I had lived in disobedience to him until that day; so deep sorrow seized me, and I knew not what to do that I might get

⁸⁸ Isaiah 43:7

⁸⁹ Matthew 12:36

⁹⁰ Corinthians 5:10

acquaintance with the God of my Life, who created me for his own praise and glory⁹¹; then I ceased from my vain conversation which I had lived in, and began to read the Scriptures, and books, and mourn and pray to a God I knew not where he was, but expected him without, looking up towards the Firmament, where my carnal imaginations told me he was, and as I had heard those the World calls Ministers, whom I went to hear, whose words did witness with my carnal imaginations of God, they said he was above the skies, calling it Heaven; but I felt the hand of the Lord within me, executing justice upon the wicked in me, and what way ever I turned to seek him in observations, thither the flaming Sword turned⁹², to keep me from the tree of life, and to execute the righteous justice of God upon me, So I stood before the Throne of the Lamb, reading my mournful estate, the sentence of condemnation passed upon me from the glory of his presence, and in this condemned estate I continued, and through the ignorance (where God was, what his Worship was) I strove to satisfy his justice in outward observations, imitating what the Saints did, sometimes in Fasting and Praying, which was the practice of Cornelius⁹³, and others of the Saints of the most high God⁹⁴, as I found in the Scriptures of Truth; But not withstanding all my strict walking in observations, in which I was seeking the Kingdom of God, I found him not, but the flaming sword⁹⁵ cut me down; so my sorrow increased, for I found none in my condition that I could declare it to.

Then it pleased the Lord to order my Friends in the flesh to put me to keep the Sheep, where I was retired from company, so my mind was kept in my mournful estate, where my great ease was in mourning to a God I knew not, nor none could tell me where I should get acquaintance with him⁹⁶. In

⁹¹ Isaiah 43:7

⁹² Luke 17:20 Genesis 3:24

⁹³ Acts 10:30

⁹⁴ Daniel 10:21

⁹⁵ Genesis 3:24

⁹⁶ Psalm 22:21

the place where I was in the outward, being a town called Allathorp, nigh Pocklington in Yorkshire; but hearing of a people in Leeds that walked more strictly in profession of the name of God than any did where I was, I had no rest in my spirit till my parents, in the flesh, sent me there to be an apprentice, not in regarding what Calling I might get among those that feared⁹⁷ the living God that I might be acquainted with God of my life who had created me for himself, and the desires the Lord raised up in me were answered, when I was thirteen years old of my natural birth I was bound an apprentice to a Cloath-maker in a town called Ha?beck near Leeds; and as I heard, so it was, there was much speaking of God, which they called preaching and professing him in words from the letter of the Scripture what the Saints had spoken forth, so intimate the saints practice in their carnal wisdom, seeking the Kingdom of God in outward Observations,⁹⁸ as I had done before I came there; but when I met with none that could tell me what God had done for their soul in redeeming them from the body of sin, which I groaned under⁹⁹, and separated me from the presence of God, though I walked strictly with them in the outward observances, running to hear one man after another, which they called Ministers, yet I found no rest nor peace for my weary soul, but the flaming sword¹⁰⁰, the righteous Law of God, cried in me ?? a perfect fulfilling of the Law of God, and did meet with me where-ever I was and I could find no peace in that worship of God the world hath set up, as in receiving the bread and the wine, which they told me was the seal of the Covenant, which was long ere I durst receive it, because I saw not myself prepared; the evil of my heart stood before me¹⁰¹, and when I was to receive it. I sought the Lord to keep me by his power that I might receive it worthily, my desire was that the Lord would seal up his love to my soul; but I found nothing sealed up in my

⁹⁷ Psalm 3:16 Hebrews 22:21? Isaiah 43:7

⁹⁸ Luke 17:20 Psalm 66:16

⁹⁹ Romans 7:24 Luke 17:20

¹⁰⁰ Genesis 3:24

¹⁰¹ 1Corrinyhians 11:28,29

soul with it: Then much fear seized upon my soul for a long time after; and Judas Condition¹⁰² was cast into my mind, **until it were showed that the seal of the covenant was the Spirit¹⁰³ of Christ**, and no outward Element ; and the supper was the body and blood of Christ, which the world doth not know, nor I at that time, but was made to wait for the manifestation of it to me: Then I durst join no more with the world in that practice; nor in their practice of singing David's conditions; which they called Psalms; for the light in my conscience let me see the evil of my heart, that I was not in David's condition; the sense of which stopped my mouth, and while they were singing, I did mourn and weep for want of the pure spirit that David had, that caused him to sing, neither could I apply the promises¹⁰⁴ which they told me belonged to me, for I found no promise belonging to that nature, but the wrath of God ¹⁰⁵abode upon me, for me disobeying the counsel in me, the Light in my conscience, (but being ignorant) it was his counsel I departed from it, and lent my ear to those without that said they spoke from the Mouth of the Lord, so was deceived, and caused to err by their lies, that did draw me to seek the Kingdom of God in observations without, but the Word of the Kingdom was in me¹⁰⁶, and executed the righteous justice of God upon my adulterous heart that took counsel, and not at his Mouth, till I was consumed, and my Body was brought so weak, I was not able to answer the expectations of him who the Lord had place me with, though my conscience was clear I did what I was able; and he in his carnal wisdom thought I was in a Consumption, and was in a mind sometimes to have sent me away to my Friends in the Flesh, and other times he would have the men the World calls Doctors, to apply some things to my Body for my Recovery, but I was not free to let them, but once for fear of giving them offence, for I knew my infirmity was the evil of

¹⁰² John 15:27 Luke 22:2 Ephesians 4:30 1Corinthians 10:16-17 Philippians 3:15 Ephesians 5:11 1 John 1:6

¹⁰³ Ephesians 1:13

¹⁰⁴ James 5:13

¹⁰⁵ Ephesians 5:6

¹⁰⁶ Jeremiah 23:32 Luke 17:20 Deuteronomy 30:14 Isaiah 30:1 Job 33: 19-22

my heart¹⁰⁷, that separated me from the presence of my God, and how to be freed from it none told me; and when I found no help in outward observances¹⁰⁸, in Reading, Praying, Hearing or Meditation of what I heard my sorrow and misery was so great, it constrained me to run to those the World calls Ministers and Professors, which appeared to me had most acquaintance with God, to ask them what I might do to be saved, and they spoke smooth things to me, to believe¹⁰⁹ in the Name of Jesus Christ, and to apply the promises, but that he was to be found within me none told me, which added to my sorrow, telling me to believe in Christ, I knew not where he was; then at the time did the Wars begin in this Nation, and my eyes being still abroad to do something in the outward observance for my life; the men called Ministers cried, Curse ye Meroz¹¹⁰, because they went not forth to help the Lord against the mighty: Then I was willing to give my body to death, in obedience to my God, to free my soul from sin, that I might escape the Wrath I lay under, and get acquainted with him; I joined with that little Remnant which said they fought for the Gospel, but when I was among them, I found as much ignorance of the Gospel, as was in those I had been with, none told me what the Gospel was, but the Letter, which is the outward Testimony and Declaration of the Gospel, which is Christ, who is the glad tidings to sinners, but they called the Letter the Gospel, as I had heard before, so I found no rest for my soul amongst them: Then I heard there was in Scotland a reformed church, whom they said walked in the fear of the Lord; I journeyed into that country, and to Edinburgh, where I found nothing but formality, their teachers calling to the people to seek the kingdom of Heaven in outward observances, as I had heard in England: Then I returned back to England again, and when among them that called themselves the Church of Christ, who are called

¹⁰⁷ Jeremiah 5:25 Isaiah 59:2

¹⁰⁸ Luke 17:20 Ezekiel 34:6

¹⁰⁹ Acts 2:37, 2 Corinthians 13:5

¹¹⁰ Judges 5:23

by the name Anabaptist, and Independents, who was setting up a more glorious Image in outward observations and said they were the Children of God; but I could not join with them, for the testimony of his Love my Soul wanted: And then the Lord discovered to me, that his Love could not be attained in anything I could do, in any of these outward observations; so in all these my turnings in my carnal wisdom, seeking the Kingdom of God in observations without, thither the flaming sword turned, which kept, the way of the Tree of Life, and fenced me from it, and cut me down, and rent all my Fig-leave Coverings, and destroyed that mind that looked out for the Kingdom of Heaven in observations, or to harken any more to hear the Word of the Lord in man: then my mind was turned within by the Power of the Lord, to wait in his Counsel, the Light in my Conscience, to hear what the Lord would say: And the word of the Lord came unto me, and said, Put up thy Sword into thy Scabbard if my Kingdom ware of this World, then would my Children Fight: ¹¹¹*Knowest thou not that if I need I could have 12 legions of angels from my Father;* which word enlightened my heart, and discovered the mystery of iniquity, and that the Kingdom of Christ was within¹¹²; and the Enemies was within, and was spiritual, and my Weapons against them must be spiritual, *the power of God*¹¹³: Then I could no longer Fight with a carnal Weapon, against a carnal Man; for the Letter, which man in his carnal wisdom, called the Gospel, and had deceived me; but then the Lord discovered to me the deceits of all these men in England, that were seeking the Kingdom of Heaven in outward observations; and the messenger of the Covenant, forth of his mouth proceeded ¹¹⁴the two edged sword, with which he slays his enemies, cut

¹¹¹ Matthew 25:52-53

¹¹² Luke 17:21

¹¹³ 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 Matt 26:53

¹¹⁴ Revelations 19:15

me down, and caused me to yield in obedience, to put up my carnal Sword into the Scabbard¹¹⁵, and to leave the Army.

Then I returned to my outward (Habitation and) calling I had in the World, and there laboured with my hands, my mind being turned within, to wait upon the Lord in the way of his Judgements; and this I witness, the administration of Moses, in which Cain is banished, Esau reprobated, Pharaoh plagued, the first born in Egypt slain, and my will brought into subjection for the Lord to do with me what his will was, if he condemned me he might, and if he saved me it was his free Love; and in this condemned estate¹¹⁶ I was crying in the depth of my misery, without hope of deliverance by anything I could do to pacify the Wrath of God, till the administration of the Prophets, that witnessed to my soul there was free redemption laid up for me in the Lord Jesus, and by the power of the Word of their Testimony, there was secret hope raised in me, to wait for his coming¹¹⁷; there I waited till the Administration of John; and I witnessed, that of all born of Woman, there was none greater than John, for he is a burning shining Light who discovered more of the mystery of iniquity in me, in his administration, and the sense of my condition was more manifest, and the cry of my condemned soul was great, and could not be satisfied, but breathed and thirsted after Christ, ¹¹⁸to save me freely through his Blood, or I perish forever, and in this condemned state I lay waiting for the coming of Christ Jesus, who in the appointed time of the Father appeared to my Soul, as the Lightening from the East to the West, and my dead soul heard his voice, and by his voice was made to live, who created me to a lively hope, and sealed me up in the everlasting covenant of life, with his Blood; then I witnessed the wages of Sin and

¹¹⁵ Matthew 26:52

¹¹⁶ Ephesians 2:8-9 Jonah 2:?? Isaiah 9:6-7

¹¹⁷ Lamentation 3:26, John 5:35

¹¹⁸ Matthew 5:6 Ephesians 2:13 Matthew 24:27

Death,¹¹⁹ and the Gift of God eternal life, through Jesus Christ my Lord; and I witnessed according to the Testimony of Scripture, Death reigns from Adam to Moses¹²⁰, and Moses until the prophets, and the Prophets until John¹²¹, and from this day the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force; there is no rest to the Soul till Christ be manifest, and this the Scripture witnessed; and I witness these Scriptures fulfilled in me, in the year according to the account 1645.

The witness¹²² that stood before the God of the Earth, and had power to plague the Earth; having finished their testimony, the Beast ascends out of the bottomless Pit, and makes war against them, and kills them, and their dead Bodies lay in the Streets of the great City, spiritual Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was Crucified, and Scripture was fulfilled in me according to the account, 1648.

Then Kindreds¹²³, Tongues, and the Nations of the Earth made merry over the Witnesses ; and I see the abomination that maketh desolate, which is spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the holy place where it ought not; and then I was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, and tempted of the Devil, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Luke 4.1

In that day and hour of temptation, which was the time, as the lines following give Testimony, witnessed these Scriptures fulfilled in me, of **EvilsHells** condition, wherein he complained¹²⁴ as I then **did which** found a Law in my members, Warring against the Law of my mind, that when I would do good, ?? was present with me; and the sense of which cause me to cry, Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And as I was crying to the Lord to free me from the burthen I

¹¹⁹ 1 Peter 1:3 Isaiah 55:3

¹²⁰ Romans 5:14

¹²¹ Matthew 11: 13 and 12

¹²² Revelations 19:15 Matthew 2:13 Revelations 11:7,8,9

¹²³ Revelations 11:10 Matthew 24:15 Daniel 11:31

¹²⁴ Romans 7:19,20,22,23,24

groaned under; the word¹²⁵ of the Lord came unto me saying. My grace is sufficient for thee, I will deliver thee and by the power of this Word I was armed with Patience to wait in his Counsel, groaning under the body of sin in the day and hour of temptation, until it pleased the Lord to manifest his Power to free me¹²⁶ , which was in the year according to the account 1651

The Spirit of Life from God entered into the Witnesses, and they stood upon their Feet¹²⁷, then great fear fell upon all that saw them; and the Temple of God was opened in Heaven, and I saw in the temple the Ark of his Testament, and there were Lightnings, voices, Thunder, Earthquakes and great Hail: then mystery Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abomination of the earth, which made all nations drunk with the Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication, she was discovered in me, and God remembered her when the mighty day of the Lords power was manifest upon her, Jesus Christ¹²⁸ was revealed Heaven in Flaming Fire, pouring vials of wrath upon her, and rendering vengeance upon all in me that knew him not (and disobeyed his Gospel) and purged away the filthy nature (That did inbondage)¹²⁹ with the Spirit of judgement, and with the Spirit of burning, so through the righteous Law of Life in Christ Jesus, I was made free, and am from the body of sin and Death; and through these great tribulations,¹³⁰ my Garments is washed and made white in the Blood of the Lamb¹³¹, who hath led me through the Gates of the City, into the new Jerusalem, where nothing enters that works abomination, or makes a lie, but what is written in the Lambs ¹³²book of Life, where my soul now feeds upon the tree of life, which I had so long hungered and thirsted

¹²⁵ 2 Corinthians 12:5

¹²⁶ Romans 7:24

¹²⁷ Revelations 17:5 Revelations 18:3,5,6,7,8

¹²⁸ 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8

¹²⁹ Isaiah 4:4

¹³⁰ Romans 8:2

¹³¹ Revelations 7:14 Revelations 22:14 Revelations 21:27

¹³² Matt5:5 Revelations 22:2 , 5 John 3:3 Revelations 20:6

after, that stands in the Paradise of God, where there is no more curse or night, but the Lord God and the Lamb is my Light and Life forever and ever; I witness I am regenerated and born again of the immortal Seed and hath partaked on the **first** Resurrection on whom the second death hath no power.

And this I declare to all the inhabitants of England and all that dwell upon the Earth, that God alone¹³³ is the Teacher of his People, and has given every one a measure of Grace, which is the light¹³⁴ that comes from Christ, that checks and reproveth for sin, in the secret of the Heart and Conscience: and all that wait in that Light which comes from Christ (which is the free Grace of God) for the power of Jesus Christ to destroy sin, and to guide them in obedience to the Light, so shall they come to know the only true God and Father of Light in Christ Jesus¹³⁵, who is the way to him: And this I witness to all the Sons of men that the knowledge of eternal life I came not to by the Letter of the Scripture, nor hearing men speak of the Name of God; I came to the true knowledge of the Scripture, and the eternal rest, (they **testify** it in Christ) by the inspiration¹³⁶ of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah, who alone is **????** was found worthy to open the Seals of the Book: and witness none else can, for he alone opened the seals of the book in me, and sealed it up to my soul, by the testimony of his own Spirit¹³⁷, according to his own promise,¹³⁸ *I will bind up the Testimony, and seal the **Law** amongst my disciples, and I will write my Law in their Hearts and put my Spirit in their Inward parts, and they shall not depart from me; neither shall they need to teach every man his neighbour, and everyman his Brother, for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest, for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,*

¹³³ John 6:45 Isaiah 53:13

¹³⁴ Matthew 25:15 John 1:19 Ephesians 5:13 Titus 2:11

¹³⁵ John 17:3 John 14:6

¹³⁶ John 5:39 Job 32:8 Revelations 5:3-5

¹³⁷ Ephesians 1:13

¹³⁸ Isaiah 8:16 Jeremiah 31:33-34. Ezekiel 35:24-28 Hebrews 8:10-12 Isaiah 54:13

and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more; and all will my Children will be taught by me, saith the Lord God, and great shall be the peace of my Children: and here declared the Scriptures witness, and I witness the Scriptures fulfilled in me; praises, praises, Hallelujah and eternal praises be unto the Lord God almighty, who hath taken unto thee thy great power to sit upon thy throne, and to the Lamb for evermore.

It being charged on me my imprisonment to be just until I give a reason of the hope of my calling, and that I am unwilling so to do: To stop the lying mouth and false accuser, and to clear Truth from the lies laid on it, as is before written, and in love to the Souls of the People, that they the Truth may know as it is in Jesus; Here I declared¹³⁹ the work of the mighty God in revealing his son to me, who led me on my journey through the dark World¹⁴⁰, where I passed through great tribulations, as formerly written, until I came to the end of the World, over it to rejoice in the power of my God (1 Corinthians 10:11 ¹⁴¹upon whom the ends of the World are come) whom the whole world lies in wickedness, hates and persecutes; but to the pure single eye, that is not of the World, I say this before which is written, that all which it minds may see the truth I bare Testimony of is not a Popish Tenet (Though I was questioned concerning them at the general Assizes held at Northampton, the tenth and twelfth of the month called march 1654) neither is seducing, not Blasphemy, nor prejudicial¹⁴² to the Truth of the Gospel, or peace of the Nation, but according to the truth of the everlasting Gospel, and found peace of the Nation, for which Testimony I am still kept in Bonds in the common Goal in Northampton, numbered among the transgressors¹⁴³, in the low Prison with those arraigned for Felony and Murder, waiting in rest and peace till the

¹³⁹ Galatians 1:15-16

¹⁴⁰ Revelations 7:14

¹⁴¹ John 5:19 Matthew 6:22

¹⁴² Revelations 14:6

¹⁴³ Isaiah 53:14

Suffering of the righteous seed be fulfilled: And all you that are Enemies of the Truth of God, persecuting it under the names, as formerly written, calling the preaching of the Truth seducing, this I declare and counsel unto you in the presence of God, after the way you call Seducing do I worship the Lord the God of my Fathers, and witness fulfilled what is written in the Law and the prophets¹⁴⁴, he that can receive me let him

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¹⁴⁴ Acts 24:14

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William Edmundson becoming a Friend

It appreciates the place of women friends. Next edition to include their stories

It concludes by asking for clarity in our thinking and living today.

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