

GEORGE FOX'S ROOTS

George Fox was born at Fenny Drayton in Leicestershire, in England, in the July, 1624, His Father was Christopher Fox, a weaver by trade, an honest man, so virtuous 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. George 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. When he was 11 Years of Age, George was apprenticed to a shoemaker who employed him as a shepherd, This employment was very well suited his mind;

George Fox, more and more endeavoured to lead a godly Life. At 19, and thirsty at a fair cousin of his asked him for a beer, He said, "Yes", and went with them to an Inn. After each had drunk a glass, they began to drink 'healths', and cousin said, he that would not drink should pay for all. This grieved George, seeing that people who professed to be religious, behaved so, and therefore he rose up to be gone; and putting his hand in his pocket,

George Fox in 1651



LSF George Fox by James Holmes, after Gerrit van Honthorst, published 1799
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he took a groat, and laid it down upon the table, saying, "If it be so, I'll leave you". 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 9th September 1643 he started *his travels/search* (*English civil war had started August 1642*)

While he led this solitary life he fasted often, and read the Holy Scriptures diligently, some Professors 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 temptations, almost to despair, and was in mighty trouble, sometimes keeping in his room to himself, and often walking solitary to wait upon the Lord. In this state he saw how Christ had been tempted; 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...

By 1647 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, "There is one even Christ Jesus,**

that can speak to thy condition." Having heard this, his heart leapt for joy.

George was shown 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 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 key, 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 when in the greatest temptations, when he almost 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 sufficient: 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 world 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. 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. 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 groans 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.....

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....,

The context of the preceding text can be read in "George Fox formative Years" free download from website www.cblfriend.com

George Fox was imprisoned in Derby for preaching in 1650, his imprisonment was extended for refusing to fight in Cromwell's army and he was released after end of Civil war in 1651.

George Fox's Journal account of his time on Firebank Fell in 1652 from Norman Penny 1911 edited verbatim et literatim edition.

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 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 3 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 steeple house 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, shepherd 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."

In 1655 **Francis Howgill** wrote that what he heard from the talk on Firebank 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. Consequently Francis Howgill's message was that Christ should be brought forth and formed in the people.

Towards Understanding Margaret Fell leaflet follows on from this.

Edited Charles B. Lamb www.cblfriend.com