

Epistle 191

by George Fox

The sermon emphasizes the importance of speaking the single language of truth, led by the light of Christ Jesus, and warns against the consequences of hypocrisy and dissembling.

Scripture: Genesis 11:1-9, Nehemiah 9:20, Nehemiah 13:24, Ezekiel 13:10-15, Matthew 6:22, John 3:20, Colossians 3:22, 1 Thessalonians 2:5, 1 Thessalonians 5:19

Topics: "Integrity in Speech", "Avoiding Hypocrisy"

Description

George Fox emphasizes the importance of adhering to the single, true language inspired by the Spirit of God, warning against the confusion and hypocrisy that arises from adopting the world's flattering and improper language. He urges believers to remain steadfast in their convictions and to avoid the double tongue that quenches the Spirit and leads to dissembling. Fox highlights that true followers of Christ should not conform to worldly customs but instead uphold the integrity of their speech and actions, reflecting the teachings of Jesus and the prophets. He calls for a rejection of selfish, man-pleasing attitudes and encourages a commitment to the light of Christ to prevent hypocrisy among believers.

Transcript

All Friends every where, that are convinced with truth, and profess it, and own it, keep to the single language [Gen 11:1], the good spirit [Neh 9:20], the light of Christ Jesus leads to it; and that which goes from that, which doth not live in it, is to be judged. And then, if man or woman seek to get gain by speaking the improper, untrue language, and flattering language of the world [1 Th 2:5], which is in confusion [Gen 11:1-9], the Lord may take that gain away from them.

For plural and singular was the language of God, and Christ, and all good men, and of the prophets and apostles; but the confused world, that lies in confusion, cannot endure it, who live not in the fear of God, neither follow the example of good men, but are in the double tongue, quenching the spirit [1 Th 5:19], and hating the light [John 3:20] of Christ Jesus, which is single [Mat 6:22]. And therefore keep to the proper, sound, single language. For indeed, I did hear some that were troubled at their apprentices and servants, for saying thee and thou to one, and because they would not say the word you; and such, who have known the language from their childhood.

And therefore that selfish, man-pleasing [Col 3:22], and daubing spirit [Ezek 13:10-15, 22:28] must be put down with the spirit, and condemned with the light, else ye will presently be ridiculous to the world, and to all men, and they will say, ye are not so as ye were in the beginning; and so follow the customs of the

world, and not the practice of Christ, and all good men. . . . For to say to Friends, thee and thou, and to the world you, that is hypocrisy. And therefore for all hypocrites, and hypocrisy and dissembling to be kept under judgment, for that is a dissembling with the witness of God. For ye see the outward Jews, when they went from the law of God, in process of time spake half Hebrew, and half Ashdod [Neh 13:24].

And therefore, to prevent all dissembling and hypocrisy, keep to the spirit of God and light of Christ Jesus, that the Jews inward may not have a mixed language, no more than the Jews outward, to speak half the confused language of the world, and half the true language.

G. F.

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