

Epistle 222

by George Fox

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living in the power of God, walking in the name of the Lord, and worshiping God in the spirit and in the truth.

Scripture: Micah 4:4, Matthew 18:20, Acts 4:12, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 1:18, Ephesians 3:9, Ephesians 4:18, Philippians 1:5, Philippians 2:9, 2 Timothy 1:10, Hebrews 13:4

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Christian Worship"

Description

George Fox preaches about the importance of dwelling in Christ, the top-stone over all, to experience eternal life and bear fruit to God. He emphasizes the significance of walking in the name of the Lord for safety and blessings. Fox urges believers to bow at the cross of Christ, the power of God, to overcome earthly temptations and live in the fellowship of the gospel. He highlights the necessity of worshiping God in spirit and truth, praying in the spirit, and singing in the spirit for public worship. Fox also critiques false teachings on perfection and encourages believers to grow in the word of God for everlasting life and holiness.

Transcript

My dear friends all every where, in the seed dwell, which is Christ the top-stone over all; feel it laid, in which is life eternal, which is over death, and before death was, and the devil, the power of it; every one sitting under their own vine [Micah 4:4], which is Christ the life, by whom the world was made, that in that ye may all bear fruit to God; and all walking in the name of the Lord, (which is the power,) then you will walk in safety. For blessed are all you that rise in the power of God, and lie down in the same power; your beds are pure, holy, and undefiled [Heb 13:4], who lie down in the power of God, before unholiness was. And so you that are gathered in the name of Jesus [Mat 18:20], who have bowed to the name of Jesus [Phil 2:10], whose name is called, the power of God, and the word, light, life, and truth; and for bowing to his name, for his name sake have ye suffered all along by many powers; his name is a strong tower [Prov 18:10]. So who have bowed to the name, and gathered in the name of the Lord, ye are in the strong tower, in which is safety and peace; for being gathered in the name of Christ Jesus, whose name is above every name [Phil 2:9], (for all things that were made, were made by Christ,) above all other names and gatherings are you gathered, who are gathered in the name of Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made and created; and being gathered in the name of Jesus Christ, by which salvation is brought, by the name of Christ, and not by any other name under heaven [Acts 4:12], but by the name of Jesus Christ is salvation brought, by whom all things were made. So ye being gathered in this name, by which salvation is

given, here ye come to be heirs of salvation [Heb 1:14], and then to inherit salvation, which is Christ
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2dly. You must bow at the cross of Christ, which is the power of God [1 Cor 1:18], which since the apostles' days the apostate christians have lost; and therefore they bow to a cross, a stick, a stone, a piece of iron, a piece of wood. . . . So bow to the power of God. If all Christendom had done this, they had had a fellowship in this cross of Christ, which is a mystery [Eph 3:9]; but a cross stick, a cross piece of wood, or iron, or stone, this is not a mystery; but the power of God, that crosseth down the earthly, carnal, ungodly part in man and woman, and works over it, and strikes over it, and goes over it, and crosseth it. There is the mystery of the cross of Christ, the power of God, in which is the fellowship; which power of God keeps the mind over all outward things, in the everlasting power of God above them; for the power of God was before unrighteousness and uncleanness, and the idolatrous part in man was; which power of God is a cross to it, and in that is the true glorying in the cross of Christ, by which ye all are crucified to the world, and dead to the world, and the world is dead to you [Gal 6:14]; dead to the world through the power of the cross, and the world is dead from the power of the cross, (in which power is the fellowship of the cross of Christ.)

3dly. The fellowship of the gospel, the power of God [Phil 1:5, Rom 1:16], expels away all that which hath darkened the understanding [Eph 4:18], darkened the mind, darkened the heart [Rom 1:21]; and by the power of God life and immortality are brought to light [2 Tim 1:10] in you. It is the portion of man and woman; and they that inherit it, they inherit the power of God, which hath no end; which was before the power of darkness [Col 1:13] was, which hath darkened people from life and immortality, and loaded their spirits; but being heirs of that which was before that was, here you inherit the gospel, you inherit the power of God, in which is stability; here you are church members, and here you are living stones, and here you are built up together a spiritual household [1 Pet 2:5]; here the church in God is known, the Father of Christ, who is the way to God [John 14:6], where the church is; for now, as Adam and Eve were drove from God, and being in the fall, their sons and daughters have their churches enough, heaps upon heaps, one against another, and heads of every church, and there they plead for sin while they live upon the earth; but the church that is in God, the Father of Christ, doth not so; for as mankind were drove from God, they must come up again out of that state, where they are defiled, and be washed, sanctified, and cleansed [Eph 5:26], and brought up out of the fall, up to God again. . . . And this is beyond all the writings, subscribings, and promising to the church fellowships that be among the sons and daughters of Adam in the fall; that when a storm comes, or a tempest, they fly from their church and fellowship both. But the gospel stands, the church in God stands, the pillar and ground of truth [1 Tim 3:15]; which the gates of hell cannot prevail against [Mat 16:18]. Top

4thly. The worship of God is in the spirit and in the truth, that is the public worship which Christ set up; he preached it when he put down the worship at the mountain, and at Jerusalem, and said, 'God is a spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and truth; and the hour is come, and now is, that the Father seeks such to worship him [John 4:23f].' Then the hour was, that worship was set up, above sixteen hundred years since, when he denied and put down the worship at the mountain and at Jerusalem, where the forefathers worshipped [John 4:20f]. So this worship in the spirit and in the truth, was contrary to the forefathers. This is the public worship, and this is not private nor particular; the nation's worships are particular, which the sons of Adam are broken into, the several worships one against another; but this worship in the spirit and in the truth, hits all men and women; they must come to the spirit in themselves, and the truth in the inward parts [Psa 51:6]; . . . by which they must know God is a spirit,

and will be worshipped in the spirit, and in the truth; and so no man must grieve, nor vex, nor quench the spirit [Eph 4:30, Isa 63:10, 1 Th 5:19], but all must worship in it, and they must come to the truth in the heart, to the hidden man in the heart, to a meek and quiet spirit [1 Pet 3:4]. And they must not rebel against the spirit [Isa 63:10], if they worship in it; and all coming to it, they have the adorning, that which beautifies and adorns them in the eyes of God; none must walk despitefully against the spirit of grace [Heb 10:29], nor turn the grace of God into wantonness [Jude 1:4], if they worship God in the spirit; if they grieve, vex, quench the spirit of God within, and turn the grace of God into wantonness, and walk despitefully against the spirit of God, and rebel against the spirit of God within, and are haters of the light [John 3:20]. These go from the public worship of God in the spirit and truth, to the particular, which fallen men have invented; but they that worship God in the spirit and in the truth, are in that which the devil is out of [John 8:44], and the dragon's worship, and the beast's worship [Rev 14:9,11], and the will-worship [Col 2:23] are out of; who worship in the truth and in the spirit, are over all these worships. For truth is before they all were, (and the spirit,) and will stand when they are all gone [1 Esd 4:38].

5thly. To pray in the spirit [1 Cor 14:15], this was public, the public prayer set up among the christians; the temple was the public place of prayer among the Jews; but to pray in the spirit, is the public prayer set up by the apostles: every man, every woman then must come to the spirit of God in their own selves; for it will give them understanding and knowledge [Isa 11:2], and give them instruction [Neh 9:20], it will help their infirmities [Rom 8:26], it will let them see their wants. So, in that must every son and daughter of Adam pray in the spirit to God, who is a spirit: and this is public, the spirit of God in every man and woman to pray with unto God, who is a spirit; then in this spirit have they fellowship and unity, and a bond of peace [Eph 4:3]: and this moderates all people, and mortifies [Rom 8:13], circumciseth [Rom 2:29], and baptizeth [1 Cor 12:13]. . . for Christ the quickening spirit [1 Cor 15:45], and the spirit of the Lord within, is that which brings people to lift up their eyes to the Lord in spirit and truth, and to watch and pray [Mark 13:33], by which they know temptations; and the spirit giveth them understanding, and wisdom, and power to withstand them.

6thly. Singing in the spirit [1 Cor 14:15] is public; every man and every woman in the whole world, they must not grieve it, nor vex it, if they sing in it; . . . for in that is the bond of peace. Top

7thly. The teachers of the world told us (who called themselves ministers of Christ) that they had received a gift from Christ, who ascended on high, and led captivity captive [Eph 4:7f]; and this gift was for the work of the ministry, and for the perfecting of the saints [Eph 4:12], and that they were to bring people to the knowledge of the son of God, from whence they had received this gift, and to the unity of the faith [Eph 4:13], which faith gives the victory [1 Jn 5:4], and brings to have access to God [Rom 5:2], and also to a perfect man's state, and to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ [Eph 4:13].

And thus people followed them, and were glad that they would bring them to a perfect man's state, that is, to the state of Adam and Eve before they fell, for they were perfect then; and when we had followed them, some twenty, some thirty, some more, some less years; then they told us again, that they hoped we would not look for perfection while we are upon the earth, on this side the grave, for we must carry a body of sin [Rom 6:6] about us; and they hoped we would not look for perfection, and would not hold the erroneous doctrine of perfection; and yet told us, as before, that they would bring us to a perfect man's state; and so we looked they would have fulfilled their words; for we had given our money, and had spent our labour [Isa 55:2] in following after them, and hoped they would have fulfilled their words, . . . and now the scriptures that speak of sin and imperfection, they bring to prove that we should not be perfect, against their own promises and words; and all the scriptures that speak of perfection or overcoming, they tell us there must

be a meaning put to them: and thus they deceived us, instead of bringing us to the measure of the stature of Christ, who never fell [1 Pet 2:22], the second Adam, the Lord from heaven [1 Cor 15:47], who said, they would bring us to his stature; and now they cannot bring us to the measure of the stature of the righteousness and holiness of our father Adam and mother Eve, that they were in before they fell; for they had no body of sin before they fell, nor spot, nor wrinkle, nor blemish [Eph 5:27].

Top Now consider which of these three states do these shepherds pretend to keep their flocks in, that deny perfection, and say their sheep must carry a body of death [Rom 7:24] on their backs while on earth; for, 'As the tree falls, it lies [Eccl 11:3],' and there is no repentance in the grave [Eccl 9:10?] Whether it be not in Adam and Eve in the fall, with his sons and daughters? Or, in that state before they fell, which was a good state, in righteousness and holiness? Or, whether it be in Christ that never fell, whom it cost his blood and his life to fetch Adam and Eve, and his sons and daughters, out of that state in the fall, (out of the unjust state,) to set them in the state before they fell; and not only there, but to bring them into himself that never fell.

Now what value, and price, and worth have they made of the blood of Christ, that cleanseth from sin [1 Jn 1:7] and death; and yet told people that they would bring them to the knowledge of the son of God, and to a perfect man, and now tell them they must not be perfect on the earth, but carry a body of sin about them to the grave? . . . But I say you are redeemed by Christ; it cost him his blood to purchase man out of this state he is in, in the fall, and bring him up to the state man was in before he fell; so Christ became a curse, to bring man out of the curse [Gal 3:13], and bore the wrath, to bring man to the peace of God, that he might come to the blessed state, and to Adam's state he was in before he fell; and not only thither, but to a state in Christ that shall never fall.

Now mark, the apostle said, 'He hath quickened us, who were dead in sins and trespasses, and hath made us to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show forth his exceeding riches and kindness towards us [Eph 2:1,6].' Now the ages are come, glory to the Lord God over all, in the highest for ever, that this kindness and these riches are seen, that the apostle's preaching is fulfilled, who said, 'He hath quickened us, and made us to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.'

So mark, in Christ Jesus, us the church, us the saints, us the believers and true christians, made us to sit together. Here was their meeting, here was their sitting in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, him that was glorified with the Father before the world began [John 17:5], him that never fell, but fetched man and woman out of the fall, to the state that man and woman were in before they fell; and they not to sit there in Adam in the fall, nor in Adam before he fell, but in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, before Adam fell.

And there is the safe sitting, in Christ the new and living way [Heb 10:10], the word of God, the power of God, the light, the life, and truth, in the first, and in the last, in the beginning, and in the ending [Rev 22:13], in him in whom is no shadow of turnings nor variableness [James 1:17]; in him the saints sit, (the church,) in Christ the head [Eph 4:15], and there are the exceeding riches and the kindness [Eph 2:7] known again. For are not here kindness and riches, for man and woman to be brought out of that state in the fall, to the state of Adam and Eve before they fell.

And he that doth bring them thither is Christ, and it is by his blood, it cost him his blood, his life, and he doth not leave them in the state that Adam and Eve were in before they fell, but he sets them down in

himself, who never fell, a safer state than Adam was in before he fell. Now who sit here in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, the first and the last, the beginning and ending, the safe place, in the wisdom of God [1 Cor 1:24]. Top So, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word [1 Pet 2:2], that you may grow thereby, (mark,) the milk that comes from the word which was in the beginning [John 1:1], by that milk is the growth, and not in the traditions, handle not them, nor the rudiments, nor the vain inventions of men neither, touch them not, taste them not, for they perish with the using of them [Col 2:20-2]; so then they do not grow by them.

But they may say thou deniest the means, because thou dost not handle the doctrines, the commandments, the rudiments that perish with the using. Now that is not the means, but that is the means, the milk that comes from the word, by which thou must grow, thy growth is not by that which perisheth; but, as I said, by the milk that comes from the word, which was in the beginning, before the false doctrines, traditions, rudiments of men, false churches, false ways, false teachings, worship, and religion were; before all these were the word of God was; thou dost not grow by any of those, if thou shouldst teach them all thy life-time, and spend thy days, thou art never the nearer, neither dost thou grow by them, nor by the tongues, which make their divines, the beginning of which was Babel, which builds up, and throws down [Gen 11:1-9], as you may see: did they not build up the church-faith and directory, and now throw them down again? . . .

So the milk which cometh from the word, is it by which thou must grow up in the things of God; and this keeps the eye pure, and nourisheth thee up in the word of wisdom [1 Cor 12:8], word of life [Phil 2:16, 1 Jn 1:1], word of patience [Rev 3:10], by the milk that comes from it, up into the word of wisdom, (for wisdom is with the gray hairs [Wis 4:9],) and so up into the life, up into a living, abiding state; for the word liveth and abideth for ever [1 Pet 1:23]; and by the milk that cometh from the word which was in the beginning, before the fall of man was, with all the confusions, false ways, worships, churches; the word was before they all were, and abides when they are all gone; feed of the word, the milk of it, and be quiet with the milk by which thou growest and art nourished up to everlasting life, by which thy fruits will be unto holiness, and the end everlasting life [Rom 6:22], feeding upon the milk that comes from the word which was before unholiness was, and stands and remains when all that is gone; by this you are all nourished, by this you all grow in a living and abiding state, up into the word Christ, whose 'name is called the word of God [Rev 19:13],' in whom is the sitting down; so heirs of Christ, and of salvation [Heb 1:14], inherit salvation, and heirs of the power of an endless life [Heb 7:16], and heirs of a kingdom that hath no end, and of a power of a world to come [Heb 6:5].

So know this to be your portion every one, that you may be heirs of the blessings, and inherit them, that with them you may be clothed, meeting in the name, in the strong tower [Prov 18:10], meeting in the spirit, in which you may pray unto and worship God, and sing [1 Cor 14:15], which is the public worship of God, which hath been lost since the apostles' days, by and amongst the inward raveners [Mat 7:15] from the spirit of God, which have been got up into particular worshipping and praying; which if they come to the public, they must come to the spirit of God, which their forefathers inwardly ravened from, and to the public praying in the spirit.

So dwell in the love of God, and build up yourselves in the most holy faith [Jude 1:20], and keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace [Eph 4:3]; and worship God in the spirit and truth [John 4:24], (which the devil is out of [John 8:44],) and in that meet in the truth, in the power of God, which was before the devil was, in which is the perfect fellowship, the gospel fellowship [Phil 1:5], which stands in the power of God [1 Cor 2:5], which was before the devil was, or the fall of man either, where all imperfection was, and is,

which the power of God expels away, in which is the perfect fellowship, as I said before.

The worship of God is a perfect worship, it is in the truth, in the spirit; so the truth is that the devil is out of, and all imperfection, which truth was before imperfection was. The worship in the truth never changeth, which is of the God of all truth, who is a spirit; and this is the perfect standing worship, which will stand when all the worships in the fall are gone, devil [Mat 4:9], dragon, beast [Rev 14:9,11], and will-worship [Col 2:23]; for truth was before they all were; for they are not perfect, being out of the truth, out of that which is perfect.

So all Friends, be faithful and valiant for the truth of God upon the earth [Jer 9:3]. For there are religions only for the summer, while the sun shines, amongst the sons of Adam in the fall; but when the storm comes, their flight is in the winter [Mat 24:20]. So this day manifesteth every birth of what sort it is, and at that look; it is not professing God, nor Christ, nor the scriptures, nor the ordinances, but mind the birth, he that is born of the flesh, and he that is born of the spirit [Gal 4:29], together with each birth's fruits [Gal 5:19-23].

For he that is born of the spirit is the royal birth of God, whose fruits are above him that is born of the flesh below, not in righteousness and love, nor of the spirit; and so each birth hath its religion, hath its worship, hath its praying, and its singing; but when the winter comes, then is its flight, and then the wall-makers are discovered, the hireling fleeth because he is a hireling [John 10:13]; but ye, mind the power of God, which was before winter storms were, and such religions as are while the sun shines and the summer is; but when the winter comes are gone. . . . and hearing the voice of Christ, which is the light, the light's voice, the life's voice, the truth's voice, the power of God's voice, which goes before you, through which ye may have life eternal [John 10:27f], in Christ's fold [John 10:16], where his sheep carry no body of sin [Rom 6:6] upon their backs, for that is carried in satan's fold, which Christ's sheep are put out of, in which life (Christ) did foresee the hirelings flying, when the wolf comes [John 10:12f].

And so christendom have more minded the hireling's voice, than Christ the light's voice, the truth's voice, the voice of the life and power of God in themselves; they have gone from that, and gone to the voice of the hireling, who flies when the wolf comes, and leaves his flock, and cares not for it. Therefore you that have heard the voice of Christ, who are his sheep, and follow him, who hath put you forth, who goeth before you, and ye have followed him [John 10:4]; follow him still, and he will give you life eternal, for he is the rest; and know the sitting down in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus [Eph 2:6], being heirs of grace [1 Pet 3:7], which grace comes by Christ [John 1:17].

Now the grace of God that brings salvation, hath appeared unto all men [Titus 2:11]; which if all men minded, this is public, it would teach them to live righteously, soberly, and godly [Titus 2:12], and to deny the contrary, and then come to be heirs of this grace, and inherit it, and so inherit their teacher that bringeth salvation, and so come to enjoy salvation, and inherit Christ, in whom are the light and life [John 1:4], and in him is the sitting down in the salvation.

All keep to the beauty of holiness [Psa 29:2]; for in holiness lies your beauty; and the fruits of righteousness is a tree of life [Prov 11:30], and the name of the Lord is a strong tower, and the righteous flee into it, and are safe [Prov 18:10].

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