

# Epistle 245

by George Fox

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*George Fox's Epistle 245 calls believers to live in righteousness and holiness through Christ, emphasizing the importance of truth and unity in their spiritual journey.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 146:8, Matthew 6:33, John 14:6, Romans 6:4, Romans 8:2, Galatians 3:16, Hebrews 12:14, Hebrews 13:8, 1 Peter 1:23, 1 John 3:9

**Topics:** "Faithfulness", "Righteousness"

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## Description

George Fox emphasizes the necessity of living in the righteousness of Christ, urging believers to maintain purity in their hearts, minds, and actions to truly see God. He warns against the distractions of worldly riches and encourages a focus on eternal treasures, highlighting that true peace and unity come from living in the spirit of God. Fox calls for a return to the pure faith that works through love, reminding his listeners that Christ, who never fell, is the foundation of their faith and hope. He stresses the importance of obedience to God's voice and the need for believers to remain steadfast in their commitment to Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Ultimately, Fox encourages a life of holiness, truth, and righteousness, which reflects the glory of God.

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## Transcript

All my dear friends every where, live in the noble seed Christ [Gal 3:16] Jesus, the saviour and the anointed one, and the righteous holy one, that your minds, hearts, souls, spirits, and bodies may be righteous, living in the righteousness of Christ Jesus, in all love, virtue, truth, and holiness, without which none can see God [Heb 12:14]. For the Lord loveth the righteous [Psa 146:8], and the righteous are in peace, and all workers of iniquity their mouths shall be stopped [Psa 107:42].

The throne of iniquity [Psa 94:20] must down, and the chamber of imagery [Ezek 8:12] in every heart; for the Lord must have the heart, for it is to be his offering and sacrifice [Psa 51:17]. All lips must be pure, and hands clean, that confess the Lord Jesus Christ, and all tongues and eyes single [Mat 6:22] to God and one to another; and all mind the Lord's business in the truth, and be given up to him, and in it, serving the Lord God in newness of life [Rom 6:4/7:6]; that all your feet may be guided in the way of peace [Luke 1:79], and to walk uprightly before the Lord in his way, which is Christ Jesus the light, which is perfect.

This is the way of the just, which is a shining light [Prov 4:18]; and in this way is the living God well pleased with you. And you that grow rich in the world in earthly things, who have had a stirring in you formerly in the service of God, take heed lest your minds run into your outward businesses, about outward

things, and therein be lifted up above the good and just spirit, and so leave the service of the Lord and his business, in minding your own. For outward riches, and the things of this world, will pass away with the outward riches therein, for they have wings [Prov 23:5]: but the word of the Lord, which lives and abides, and endures for ever, will remain [1 Pet 1:23].

Labour for the riches of it, for that will endure with you; and seek the kingdom of God [Mat 6:33], which will never have an end, that stands in righteousness and in holiness, in which you have joy and peace in the holy ghost [Rom 14:17]; then all outward things will follow, which are below. So that in righteousness, holiness, and truth, as just men and holy men, and men fearing God, and as righteous men, sons, and servants, and children of God, you may all live, in all righteousness, holiness, pureness, truth, justice, and equity, in all manner of life and conversation; so that your conversations may shine as lights of the world [Mat 5:14], knowing that all unrighteousness, uncleanness, unholiness, injustice, untruth, and impurity are not of God, but are out of the kingdom of God; and likewise all cheaters and cozeners, who do enrich themselves by falsehood; and all drunkards, adulterers, whoremongers, fornicators, murderers, idolaters, and liars; these works and workers are out of the kingdom of God [1 Cor 6:9f] and his power, and they are of their father the devil, who is out of the truth [John 8:44].

And therefore in the truth live, which the devil and his works are out of; and that truth makes you free [John 8:32]. In which truth and spirit is God worshipped [John 4:24]. All that do violence, cursed speakers and swearers, are out of the truth and the command of Christ Jesus; and therefore live you in the love of God, in which you may be sensible of his mercies; in which love, you living in the pure humility, you learn of Christ Jesus [Mat 11:29]. For presumption is learned of Adam in the fall, of the serpent that brought him into the fall, where all the defilement is and the profaneness.

Being in the whoredom from God, where all manner of whoredom and uncleanness is, and deceit and falsehood, the liar, and all sin, and unrighteousness, and transgression. And this is comprehended all to be in the fall, with the serpent that brought them into the fall, whose head Christ comes to bruise [Gen 3:15], that is, to break his power and strength, and to destroy him and his works [Heb 2:14, 1 Jn 3:8]. And Christ is pure, the holy one that doth this, the righteous one, the holy one, and in him live, the second Adam [1 Cor 15:45,47] that never fell [1 Pet 2:22]; then shall you come to know a state that will never fall, in that which is first and last [Rev 1:11].

For Christ that sanctifies is pure, who sanctifies the impure; he who never fell, sanctifieth and washeth them that are in the fall; he who never transgressed, redeems out of transgression; he who never sinned, redeems out of sin, and makes an end of it; and he who never trespassed, comes to forgive trespasses and blot them out [Col 2:13f]. And every one that comes to witness this forgiveness by him, who have been the trespassers against God, they cannot but forgive men their trespasses against them [Mat 6:14f], as they come into the kingdom of glory and life, where the Lord hath his glory.

Oh! the glory of the Lord which lasteth for ever! And glory, glory be to him for ever, whose everlasting glory, and life, and power shines over all, and spreads itself, and puts forth itself over all.

O friends! let righteousness flow amongst you all, truth and equity, uprightness and holiness, which become the house of God [Psa 93:5]; and live in the holy order of the life, spirit, and power of the everlasting God. Keep in the faith that works by love [Gal 5:6], that purifieth your hearts [Acts 15:9]; the mystery of which is held in a pure conscience [1 Tim 3:9]; which faith brings you to have access to God [Rom 5:2], and gives you victory [1 Jn 5:4] over that which separates from God [Rom 8:38f].

This is that by which you subdue mountains [1 Cor 13:2], and quench the fiery darts of satan [Eph 6:16], and overcome him withal; and in this you have all pure unity [Eph 4:13]; and you edify [1 Tim 1:4] and build up in the holy faith [Jude 1:20] the gift of God [Eph 2:8]; and this is that which is to be contended for, which is the same that was once delivered to the saints [Jude 1:3]. Oh! live in the pure hope, which purifies you as he is pure [1 Jn 3:3]; which hope is Christ [1 Tim 1:1], who was before the hypocrite's hope [Job 8:13] was, who both (him and his hope) are impure; and so feel Christ your hope, which anchors your immortal souls [Heb 6:19], that stays it in all waves, storms, and tempests, and is sure and safe in all weathers; Christ, who is the same to-day as he was yesterday [Heb 13:8]; so no new thing.

For he is the rock of ages [Isa 26:4-KJV margin], who was before ages; who is the corner-stone [Eph 2:20], and also the first and last [Rev 1:11], who will crush and bruise to pieces all giddy, wandering, and unestablished spirits, and confound them who are cunning, and hunt before the Lord [Gen 10:8f]; for the Lord should go before them, he should be the guide. For they that hunt before him, will not have the Lord to be their guide, who is the same to-day as he was yesterday, and so for ever.

For Adam and Eve did not abide in their possession, nor Cain, nor Core, nor Balaam; see what came upon them, and what was their end. And likewise the Jews did not abide in the possession of the law of God, which was just and holy. And also the apostatized christians have gone from Christ, and did not abide in him, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; therefore they are gone into so many ways, and seek after so many new ways, and run into so many fables, as though Christ, who is obeyed one day, should not be obeyed next day.

And this is disobedient Cain, wandering in the land of Nod, smiting at Abel [Gen 4:14,16.8], who obeys him [Heb 11:4], who is the same today as he was yesterday, and so for ever; yea a lamb slain from the foundation of the world [Rev 13:8]; who reigns over that nature that hath slain him, and will reign till he hath put all under his feet [1 Cor 15:25]. And therefore, friends, in Christ live, and in him walk; hear, obey, and follow him, who is the same to-day as he was yesterday, and so for ever.

And so you that are the true believers, who are past from death [John 5:24], and sin that brought it, and the devil the author of it, are come to the life of Christ Jesus, (who, as I said before, is the same to-day as he was yesterday,) if your belief stand in him that is the first and last, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever. And this is the believer that is born of God, the immortal birth; and this birth is he that overcomes the world, that doth not sin, that keeps himself, because he is born of God, and the seed of God remains in him [1 Jn 3:9]; and hereby the children of God, and the true believers are manifest from the false believers and children of the devil.

He that doth righteousness is of God; he that doth not righteousness, is not of God [1 Jn 3:10]. Therefore you that feel the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, to have put down the law of sin and death in you, (that authority of putting it down,) be ye ordered by the law of the spirit of life that is in Christ Jesus, which makes you free from the law of sin and death [Rom 8:2]. So in this law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus have you fellowship, order, rule, and government, in the law of life, and in the law of peace that gives victory, which Christ Jesus is the author of, who renews you up into the righteousness and holiness in the image of God [Eph 4:24/Col 3:10], out of the unrighteousness and unholiness, and the image of satan.

Here the Lord hath the glory, and Christ your holy redeemer and saviour is confessed, to the glory of God. So wait that you may all sit down in Christ [Eph 2:6], who is the first and the last [Rev 1:11], and the image of God [2 Cor 4:4], and wisdom of God [1 Cor 1:24]; that by his wisdom, which is pure [Jas 3:17],

righteous, and holy, you may come to order all things to God's glory [Wis 8:1/1 Cor 10:31].

Adam fell from the state God placed him in; and in the fall, Adam's sons and daughters turn from way to way of their own. But for man and woman to come out of all national corrupt ways, religions, churches, worship, fellowships, and teachers, to the state that Adam and Eve was in before they fell, and no farther; that is a state where he may fall again. But, to come to Christ, who was before the world began, who is first and last, beginning and ending [Rev 1:8,11], such abiding in him shall know a state that will never fall.

For Adam's state before he fell, was above all the earthly and worldly wise, and knowing, and their dark understandings and perverse ways, which their perverse spirit leads into; where are all manner of uncleanness, unrighteousness, falsities, puffing-up and pride, and all the crooked, rough, cross ways, and mountains of sin [Isa 40:4], which are become as graves and prisons for the just. Adam's state before he fell is beyond all this, who fell into this; but Christ that never fell, is a state beyond Adam; and he is to be heard and followed that never fell; and in him are people to sit down [Eph 2:6], who is the rest, and peace, and life; who destroyeth the devil and his works [Heb 2:14, 1 Jn 3:8], and makes an end of sin, together with ungodliness and unrighteousness, which hath dishonoured God [Rom 2:23]; so bruise the head of the serpent [Gen 3:15], and breaks his power, and crusheth him to pieces, that the seed Christ [Gal 3:16] may rise in all; which honoureth the Father [John 5:23].

Now this being manifest and known in all, then the lamb is known to have the victory [Rev 17:14], which hath been slain from the foundation of the world [Rev 13:8]; and then in the seed you come to know your election before the world began [1 Th 1:4, 2 Tim 1:9]. And here the Lord's words are fulfilled, his glory he will not give to another [Isa 42:8, 48:11], who destroyeth that that took the glory to itself; which brings up to that noble seed and plant in man which gives the glory to God.

And here as you live in the seed Christ Jesus, your election you know before the world began, and reprobation since the world began. For Core, Cain, Ishmael, Esau, Sodom, and Egypt, spiritual and temporal [Rev 11:8], have been since the world began. For Egypt is thralldom, bondage, anguish, and darkness [Exo 2:23, 10:21f], and Sodom is whoredom [Jude 1:7], and Cain disobeyed the voice of God [Gen 4:6-8], and Core gainsayed the law [Jude 1:11]; and whoever feels all this nature in them, they are vessels of wrath; and let them not complain and say, why hast thou made me thus?

For there are vessels of honour, and vessels of dishonour. Vessels of mercy, vessels of wrath [Rom 9:20-23]. And it is not in him that willeth and runneth, but in God that showeth mercy [Rom 9:16]. Now Esau, the first birth, signifieth a worker. Jacob the second birth, signifieth a supplanter [Gen 27:36]; and when Jacob hath supplanted Esau the first birth, the profane nature, Jacob is called Israel; that is as much as to say, thou hast power with God now [Gen 32:28]. So where the election is risen, and hath put down Cain, Core, Egypt, Sodom, the first birth slain, which brought all the wrath into the vessel, and the old bottle broken; here is a new bottle that holdeth the new wine [Mat 9:17], and vessels of honour, and vessels of mercy, in the election before the world began; and you have all things made new, a new heaven and a new earth [Rev 21:1,5].

And all Friends, that be in any manner of sufferings, imprisonments, or banishments for Christ and his truth's sake, live in Christ and sit down in him, in whom you have all peace, life, virtue, and rest in Christ Jesus, who was before all that was that makes to suffer, and will remain when it is all gone; and was the 'first and last, the beginning and ending, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever [Heb 13:8].' In him sit down and live, that doth not change; then your religion doth not change, your worship doth not change,

your way doth not change; for Christ is your way [John 14:6], 'who is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever;' and your fellowship, and unity, and community do not change, being with the Father, who doth not change, but is the same from everlasting to everlasting. And they whose religion, fellowship, and worship change, and who gad about, and change their ways, are fickle, and have itching ears [2 Tim 4:3] after the ways that change from Christ, who doth not change, who is the way, the 'same to-day as he was yesterday,' to be walked in. . . .

Ah! my dear friends and brethren every where! the power of the Lord God is over all, live in it, that you may feel a unity and fellowship in the power of the Lord God; that through that power of the Lord God you may all come to be heirs of the power of an endless life [Heb 7:16]; through which you may inherit eternity, and so to feel life eternal abiding in you; the manslayer hath not eternal life abiding in him; that is, he that envies his brother [1 Jn 3:15]. So all the persecutors that envy their brethren have not eternal life abiding in them.

Under this all the persecutors about church, religion, worship, faith, ministry, and fellowships, and envious persons, having not eternal life abiding in them, are comprehended. Therefore you all, feel this eternal life abiding in you. And he that hath the son of God hath life [1Jn 5:12] eternal abiding in him; and so in this eternal life you have an eternal fellowship with God and his son, and with one another. And in this the law of life, that is in Jesus Christ, passeth sentence on the law of sin and death [Rom 8:2] in every man and woman, and brings it to the execution.

Through which law of life righteousness flows, and runs down as a stream [Amos 5:24], and also justice and truth. Here by this law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, (mark, in Christ Jesus,) you come to know the Lamb's throne, and the throne of iniquity [Psa 94:20] thrown down, its mouth stopped [Psa 107:42], and the chambers of imagery [Ezek 8:12] thrown down, and the household of God raised [Eph 2:19]; the fruitless trees thrown down [Luke 13:6f], and the plant of God raised up, which is of his own planting; a tree of righteousness [Isa 61:3], whose fruit is unto holiness, whose end is everlasting life [Rom 6:22].

So mark here the fruits of this tree, and the end of this tree. By this you distinguish man's planting, and man's plucking up; and God's building you will distinguish from man's building; and man's plucking down, and man's gathering together, you that are gathered in the name of Jesus distinguish, and his scattering [Mat 18:20, 12:30?]. Oh! therefore be valiant for the truth [Jer 9:3], which you are come to the knowledge of, and worship God in that truth which the devil is out of, and abode not in [John 4:24, 8:44]; this makes you free from the devil and his works, that are out of truth.

Here in this worship, in the truth and in the spirit, the living God, who is a spirit, the God of all truth, hath his glory and honour from the spirit of the Lord in every heart. And so keep in the spirit, and truth, and power of the everlasting God, who is from everlasting to everlasting, that you may know him Lord of the earth and of the heaven, and of the heaven of heavens [Deut 10:14], ruling and reigning, whose eye is over all his works, that you may glorify him in his power and spirit, and serve him in the new life [Rom 6:4/7:6]; which will keep you over all men's fables and devices, whimsies and imaginations, out of all janglings and vain disputes of men of corrupt minds [1 Tim 6:5]: and so it is good for you all to live in him which is the 'same to-day as he was yesterday,' Christ Jesus, the power of God [1 Cor 1:24], and the seed of life, and word which was in the beginning [John 1:1]: so no new thing, but that which was and is to all eternity: let your fellowship be in that, and your unity and communion be in that; for this is seen by the eternal eye, the eternal unity, and the eternal God.

So hear his voice, every one of you, that speaks from heaven, whose voice shakes the earth, and not the earth only, but the heavens also. The heaven imports joy: so all the false joys, the lifted-up joys, or exalted joys, and joys in vain glory, and joys in the world, or any outward thing or creature, and men or women; his voice that speaks from heaven shakes the earth and the heavens; and these must be shaken and removed, both the heavens and the earth, before that doth appear that can never be shaken [Heb 12:26f], the noble, royal seed, elect and precious [1 Pet 2:6], before the world began.

Being heirs of him, come to inherit him: in him you shall know that which cannot be shaken, and there is the true joy, in that which is from everlasting to everlasting, who is the beginning and ending: here are not any either lifted up or fallen down to despair. So, I say, hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for not hearing the voice, you harden your hearts, and then you provoke God to wrath and sore displeasure [Psa 95:7-11]. Let him have your ear, that speaks from heaven, that you may come to observe his counsel, teaching, instruction, and direction; for all the prophets and holy men of God [2 Pet 1:21], and the apostles, were attentive and obedient to this heavenly voice, who witnessed to the truth, who had a witness in heaven [Job 16:19] also. . . .

Oh! the glory, glory of the Lord, that spreads over all! And here you have his savour, and can taste your meat in the power of the Lord God, feeding upon every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God [Deut 8:3], having every one's ear attentive to his voice: in this you grow up in the life that is eternal.

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