

Epistle 265

by George Fox

The sermon emphasizes the importance of believing in the light of Christ, which is the divine revelation of His power and presence, and trusting in His power to lead us through life's challenges.

Scripture: Psalm 110:3, Psalm 121:4, Matthew 25:1, John 4:24, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 2 Corinthians 6:2, Ephesians 4:30, 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 1 Peter 1:5, Revelation 19:7

Topics: "Divine Preservation", "Spiritual Purity"

Description

George Fox preaches about the importance of believers in the light of Christ being kept by the power of God until the day of salvation, emphasizing the need to stay pure and blameless through the power of God. He uses the parable of the virgins in Matthew 25 to illustrate the concept of being preserved in virginity by the power of God. Fox urges believers to have faith in the power of God as their keeper, guiding them through temptations and leading them to the day of God's power and salvation.

Transcript

All you that are believers in the light of Christ, which manifesteth darkness, ye are kept by the power of God unto the day of salvation [1 Pet 1:5]. So, though your salvation is not yet completed, yet you have your keeper, the power of God, which neither slumbers nor sleeps [Psa 121:4; cf Mat 25:5], and it will keep you unto that day. For those virgins, in the parable [Mat 25:1-10], they had their keeper, by which they were preserved in their virginity, which they were never accused of losing; for it is said, that 'the cry was at midnight [Mat 25:6];' that is, the mid-time of darkness; for darkness is called night [Gen 1:5], and the voice of the bridegroom was at midnight, 'Arise.'

Now they that had no oil in their lamps did not enter with the bridegroom, but they that had oil did. Now that which doth keep is the power of God, and preserves pure unto him in the virginity, from that which would defile the virgin mind, and the virgin soul and spirit. For it is all from the same man of sin that defiles the mind, and the spirit, that leads them out to defile their bodies, and corrupt them; therefore all are to mind their keeper, the power of God, which was before the devil, the man of sin [2 Th 2:3], was; by which power of God they have oil in their lamps, through which their lamps may be always burning in their temple [Lev 24:2,4], and such come to be the temple of God; for they that defile the temple, defile their souls and bodies [1 Cor 3:16f], they let in the defiler and destroyer, and so their lamps go out, and they go from God and his power, the keeper, and such God will destroy.

And so many as are kept by the power of the Lord unto the day of salvation [2 Cor 6:2], though the day of salvation is not yet completed, yet in the day of salvation the people of God are a willing people, even in this day of his power [Psa 110:3]. And so they are to abide with their keeper, which is the power of God; for while they be in the night, and not in the day of salvation, nor day of power, though they may be in the wilderness of temptations [Psa 95:8?] and trouble, yet may feel the power, the keeper, to lead through all these things, out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, through the wilderness, through Jordan, the river of Judgment, and over the Canaanites; and therefore every one's faith is to stand in the power of God [1 Cor 2:5], and believe in the power of God, that will bring to the day of God's power, and to the day of his salvation.

For the outward Jew did not enter, because of unbelief; and so this great foul man of sin hath defiled all mankind outwardly and inwardly. And therefore all to have their faith to stand in the power of God, their keeper; for the defilement is in the night, by the power of darkness, and through it. Therefore let thy faith stand in the power of God, thy keeper [1 Pet 1:5], which will keep body, and soul, and spirit clean and blameless to the day of redemption [Eph 4:30], and day of salvation [2 Cor 6:2]; and by the power of God such will have a dominion over the foul man of sin [2 Th 2:3], the devil; for it is he in people that leads and tempts to outward defilement of their body, and so to lose their virginity; and it is he that draws their minds from God and Christ, and from God's ways, and his worship, and his truth, and his spirit, and his grace, and his faith that he works in people.

Therefore if thy faith stand in the power of God, all by it is preserved in this, body, soul, and spirit, in purity and a hidden mind, soul, and spirit, secret to the Lord, who is a spirit [John 4:24]; and they are preserved by his power, their keeper. For, as is the saying of some of the world, that are the most modest, that they will keep their outward virginity to the day of their death, or of their marriage, but such as before that have no esteem of their bodies, no more than unruly beasts, give up their bodies to uncleanness, and themselves to work wickedness, and so forsake their keeper, the power of God, which should keep both inwardly and outwardly.

And so all the inward virgin minds, and souls, and spirits, that are hidden to the Lord, they will die before they will lose their inward virginity, but will keep it to the marriage of the Lamb [Rev 19:7], as the wise virgins did; by which power they are preserved over the man of sin, whom Christ their husband bruises the head of [Gen 3:15], and destroys him and his works. [Heb 2:14/1 Jn 3:8] For Christ was before the man of sin was, (the devil, or his works either,) who was glorified with the Father before the world began [John 17:5]; and therefore all such virgins as are come to Christ, and are married to him, Christ your husband [2 Cor 11:2], he will deal with the foul man of sin, and bruise his head, and break his power and strength to pieces, and will take him and cast him into everlasting fire [Mat 25:41].

And therefore keep your faith in the power of God, which will bring you to the marriage of the lamb [Rev 19:7]; by which power of God, which was before the devil was, you may have oil in your lamps, that your lamps may burn always [Lev 24:2,4]; by which power of God you may come to the day of God's power, and all to be a willing people [Psa 110:3], to serve God, and walk in truth [3 Jn 1:3f], and to obey him; and so by the same power of God, which is your keeper [1 Pet 1:5], you may come to the day of salvation; you may have the song of salvation, and joy of salvation [Psa 51:12], and comfort of salvation, and the possession of salvation, and be heirs of the same [Heb 1:14].

And so here you have your keeper, to wit, the power of God. And Peter's words answer to this, 'You have a light which you do well to take heed unto, that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day

star arise in your hearts [2 Pet 1:19];' signifying it is sufficient, which you must take heed to, it will lead you to the day dawning, the light that shines in the dark place of your hearts, in the dark place of your minds. Now you do well to take heed to this light, for it leads you to the day star, and day dawning.

'Out of Egypt have I called my son [Hos 11:1],' saith the Lord; and Israel was called God's son, who was called out of the house of darkness and bondage [Exo 13:3]; they had light in Goshen [Exo 9:26], when the children of Egypt were in darkness [Exo 10:21f], and could not see one another. For now the children of light have light, and can see one another; the children of Egypt, Sodom, and Babylon cannot see one another. And so, they do well that take heed to the light, but they do ill that do not take heed to the light, for they walk in darkness, and know not whither they go [John 12:35], and stumble at noon day [Isa 59:10], the highest time of light; for this light leads to the day dawning, and day star arising in their hearts, which is a sure word of prophecy 2 Pet 1:19].

A prophet is a seer, and so with the light he will see, that which doth make manifest is light [Eph 5:13]; by it you shall see the day dawning, and the day star arising, and when that ariseth, the sons of God sing together, because of the joyful day; and the saints sing [Psa 30:4], who have long been in the brambly, briary wilderness, and in the house of bondage [Exo 13:3], of darkness and trouble, and of sorrow and misery. Therefore, there is joy when the day star appeareth and the day dawn; there is great cause of joy for all the sons of God, when the day star appears, and for them to sing together; for long nights of trouble and travel have they been in.

'The path of the just is a shining light,' the path of the unjust is darkness. So there are but two paths. Now the unjust cannot abide to hear talk of the light, but call it natural, and created and made, or conscience, they do not know what to call it, whose darkness cannot comprehend the light, though it shines in the darkness [John 1:5]; and so, the path of the just being 'a shining light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day [Prov 4:18];' signifying that the day is come, that the just hath his path, and his path is a shining light; and so increaseth, shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Now the unjust being in darkness, they hate the light, and love darkness rather than light; the just man's path, the light, because their deeds are evil; for the light will reprove them [John 3:19f]. So the just man's path is sufficient, a shining light: for it shines more and more, it increaseth, it is sufficient, and brings to the perfect day. Now the unjust, whose path is darkness [Prov 4:19], say, 'It is not sufficient,' but such cannot abide the light, cannot abide the just man's path, nor the just neither, but hate both, and speak against him and his path, with his darkness, that cannot comprehend the light, though light shines in his darkness; and therefore if he cannot comprehend the light with his darkness, (how can he comprehend the prophets', and apostles', and Christ's words?) but calls light darkness, and darkness light [Isa 5:20], and calls it natural, or created, or made, or conscience; and so this comes to be fulfilled on them, as John said, who with their darkness could not comprehend the light, yet they would be talking of the saints' words, law and prophets, with their darkness, which could not comprehend the light.

They would call light, darkness, saith Christ, 'If that light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness? [Mat 6:23] You neither know the scriptures nor the power of God [Mat 22:29]. How should they know the scriptures or the power of God either, whose darkness does not comprehend the light? A dark man, is a blind man. A blind man hath not true judgment. Therefore how should they call it otherwise, but a natural light, a created or made light? So the Pharisees believed that Christ was to come, and preached him to come; as the Protestants and Papists preach him, that he is come and to come; and can tell by scripture where he was crucified, as the Jews could tell by scripture where he was to be born.

But they were all against Christ, the light. When he came, they said, 'Christ had a devil [John 7:20].' The Pharisees said of him, who was light, that he was the prince of devils [Mat 9:34]; who was the light, and the truth, and the life; and that he was the carpenter's son [Mat 13:55]. So without the light they could not see him, nor his works, with their darkness; neither can they now, neither can they know the scriptures nor the power of God, whose darkness cannot comprehend the light [John 1:5].

And John was a man sent from God [John 1:6], the greatest prophet born of a woman, who came for a witness, to bear witness of the true light [John 1:8], which lighteth every man that cometh into the world [John 1:9], that all through him might believe [John 1:8]; and it is said, in Christ was light; and this light was the life of men [John 1:4]. And so the life that is in Christ, is the light of men. So this is a heavenly light, a divine light, a spiritual light, a saving light; which is the life of Christ, which is the light of men; though the professors in Christ's time, and these times, Papists and Protestants, with their darkness, cannot comprehend the light, so not the life; so no true preachers of Christ without the light and life.

John said, he was not the light, but was sent to bear witness of the light [John 1:7]. That he was not worthy to unloose the latchet of Christ's shoes [John 1:27]. And yet John, who had seen Christ, the lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world [John 1:29], pointed his disciples to him, and showed them Christ; and they forsook him and went to Christ [John 1:35-37]. For John came for a witness, to bear witness of him who was the true light; and that he that was to come after him, was preferred before him, for he was before him [John 1:30].

Yet when John was cast into prison, he questioned whether Christ was he, or whether he should look for another; and sends to Christ. And Christ answers his messengers, and saith unto them, the blind receive their sight, and the poor receive the gospel, &c [Mat 11:1-6, Luke 7:19-23]. And as for these Papists, and Protestants, and Jews, they question whether Christ, the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, be the spiritual, divine, saving, and heavenly light.

And further, mark Christ's own words. John xii. 46. He saith, 'he is the light of the world [John 8:12, 12:46], that teacheth you how to believe;' to wit, all his disciples, as Christ hath taught them, who saith, believe in the light [John 12:36]. Now, believing in the light, you believe in that which doth make manifest all things; for that which doth make manifest is the light [Eph 5:13]; and therefore to believe in the light, is to believe in that which doth make manifest Christ to be their way, their teacher, priest, mediator, interceder, saviour, and redeemer. . . .

Which is plain, that they are no true believers that do not believe in the light, neither Jews, nor those that have got the name of christians; for believing in the light, they become children of the light [John 12:36]. And so it is plain, they are no children of light but who believe in the light, nor children of the day [1 Th 5:5]. For children of darkness may profess scriptures, the devil may bring scriptures, and Protestant, and Turk, and Papist, and Jew may bring scriptures, with a dark spirit, and hold them in the unrighteousness; but there is no true believer in God, nor in Christ Jesus, but who believes in the light, which the scripture testifies of; showing there is no salvation, redemption, justification, sanctification, but to them who believe in the light, that manifesteth all things, nor seeing Christ, who died, and is risen for them.

And therefore the heavenly man, the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ [1 Cor 15:47], teacheth how to believe, and saith, 'believe in the light, while you have it [John 12:36];' and this light will manifest him to be their way, their truth, and life [John 14:6]; which light comes from him who enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world [John 1:9], that all through the light might believe [John 1:7]. . . . So Christ the light

teacheth his people to believe in that which manifests all things; and they that believe in the light have the witness in themselves of Christ, in whom they do believe, they have the witness in themselves, that he is their redeemer, and saviour, and their way, their truth, and their life; for with the light they see him, they believing in the light that doth make manifest; and after they believe in the light, become children of the light; they witness themselves, that they are sealed, for their belief in the light stands in Christ the light, who hath bought and purchased them; and after that they are sealed by the spirit of promise [Eph 1:13], having God's mark or stamp set upon them [Rev 14:1?], they can set to their seal, that God is true in all his promises, in all his prophets concerning Christ Jesus, who taught them to believe in the light.

With the light they see, and come to know the 'three that bear record in heaven [1 Jn 5:7],' and the 'three that bear record on earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood 1 Jn 5:8.' First, the spirit that beareth witness in the earth, which mortifies them [Rom 8:13], which circumcises them [Rom 2:29], which leads them into all truth [John 16:13]; in which spirit is their fellowship, and a bond of peace [Eph 4:3], that keeps down that which troubles them; by which spirit the believers are baptized into one body [1 Cor 12:13], brought out of the many bodies; and so by the spirit they are brought to the one head, which is Christ Jesus, (though there are many heads in the world,) by which spirit they are sanctified [1 Cor 6:11], by which spirit they are instructed [Neh 9:20], by which spirit they worship God [John 4:24], by which spirit they are covered [Isa 30:1?], by which spirit they pray, and by which spirit they sing praises to God [1 Cor 14:15] who is a spirit, by which spirit they have an understanding, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge [Isa 11:2], which is to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent [John 17:3], which is life eternal. 2dly.

They come to know the water, which is a witness in the earth; by which water they are washed, their minds, their souls, their spirits, and in their bodies, with this pure water [Heb 10:22]. And this is a witness in the earth with the light; they that believe in it, it manifesteth these two witnesses in the earth, and with the light they see the pope's counterfeit holy water, which he hath set up since the apostles' days, who with the light bear witness against it, not to be God's witness, nor God's setting up.

And so the children of the light, that believe in the light, their bodies, their souls, their spirits, and their minds are washed clean in this pure, clean, holy water, that comes from above, from the pure holy God, which is one of these witnesses in the earth. The third witness is his blood, with which the hearts of people are sprinkled, and their consciences are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus. As Moses sprinkled the outside of the posts, &c. with the blood of bulls and goats; which blood of bulls and goats, Christ's blood ends [Heb 9:13f], which sprinkles the heart and conscience of people [Heb 10:22].

So this blood of Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, is felt in the hearts and consciences of people; by which blood they are sanctified [Heb 13:12], they are cleansed from all their dead works, to serve the living God [Heb 9:14], and to serve their dead works no longer. So by this blood they are cleansed from all sin [1 Jn 1:7]. They that walk in the light, and believe in the light, they are children of the light, and children of the day [1 Th 5:5]; and the blood of Jesus Christ, the son of God, cleanseth them from all sin; and their garments are made white in the blood of the Lamb [Rhev 7:14]; by which they come to testify of Jesus, they overcome the beast, the whore, the false church [Rev 17:3-5].

And so every true believer, believes as Christ hath taught them, to believe in the light, that so they may become children of the light [John 12:36]. They have these three witnesses that bear witness in the earth, to bear witness in themselves [1 Jn 5:10]; and they can set to their seal, that God is true [John 3:33] in all his works, in prophets and apostles, and his son; and they shall come to know, and do come to know, the three that bear record in heaven, and the three that bear record in the earth.

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