

Epistle 311

by George Fox

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living in love, humility, and brotherly love, and striving to continue in the new life and new covenant.

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1

Topics: "Christian Living", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

George Fox preaches about the importance of embodying the spirit of Christ, emphasizing patience, humility, and love as key virtues to uphold. He urges believers to let Christ be their master, guiding them in wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification. Fox also highlights the significance of maintaining unity, speaking truth in love, and avoiding behaviors that disrupt peace within the community of believers.

Transcript

Dear Friends,--Let all things be done in love, and in the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of the lamb, that must have the victory [Rev 17:14]; for patience runneth the race, and hath the crown [Heb 12:1/1 Cor 9:24f]. And keep down rough Esau's spirit [Gen 27:11,16,21-23], for that will not let the Jew inward [Rom 2:29] pass the king's highway [Num 20:17f]. And therefore quench nothing that is good; but keep in the love of God, that is shed in your hearts [Rom 5:5], and every one keep to your own springs, and at your own breast, and feel your own bread in your own house (from heaven.)

And strive not for mastery [1 Cor 9:25], but let Christ be the master, who is the wisdom of God, and your wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and justification [1 Cor 1:30], and you to dwell in humility and love, that will bear all things [1 Cor 13:7]; and that is not easily provoked [1 Cor 13:5], and envieth not [1 Cor 13:4]: if your love is not in this love, it is not the love of God. Though you may be convinced of the truth; but they are happy that do obey the truth of what they are convinced; and if they do not, they will lose the days of their innocency and simplicity.

And know the birth that is freeborn [Gal 4:22-31], which can give the cheek to the smiter [Isa 50:6]; for there is a birth of the mortal seed, and there is a birth of the immortal seed, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth for ever [1 Pet 1:23]; which latter hath a habitation that is for ever [2 Chr 6:2]. And take heed, friends, in laying open one another's weakness; but if any one has any thing to say, let them speak to the person concerned; and if they will not hear, take two or three more, before they are brought into public [Mat 18:15-17].

This is the order of the head Christ, to his body, his church. And if any report be upon any, let them speak to the parties that are concerned; for the report may be false: and the Lord saith, 'Thou shalt not raise a false report [Exo 23:1] upon my people.' So in this you will have a care one of another [1 Cor 12:25], for one another's good, preferring one another [Rom 12:10] in the truth. And so let the true brotherly love continue [Heb 13:1], and kindness, affableness, and courteousness, and whatsoever is decent, comely, and of a good report [Phil 4:8] in the eyes of God, and the hearts of all good men, that follow after; and so, that in your men and women's meetings, nothing may be seen of the old leaven, of the old malice [1 Cor 5:7f], nor of the old man, nor his deeds [Col 3:9], nor his old image, nor his old bottle be drunk of [Mat 9:17], nor his sour grapes eaten of; for if you do, it will set your teeth on edge [Jer 31:30], one against another.

But mind the royal seed, Christ Jesus, that makes all things new [Rev 21:5], that new and living way [Heb 10:20], a new man, after God and his image [Col 3:10]: so children of the new covenant, having the new leaven, that leavens up into the love of God, which edifies the body, [Eph 4:16] of which Christ is head [Col 1:18]; and new bottles, full of new wine [Mat 9:17] from Christ the vine [John 15:1]; the new wine which makes all your hearts glad [Psa 104:15] to God and Christ, and one in another.

So here is the new heart, the new spirit [Ezek 18:31], the new life, in which the living God is served [Rom 7:6/Heb 9:14]. And therefore, this is the word of the Lord God to you all, 'Let this new way, new covenant, new man, new leaven, new wine, new life, show forth its fruits in the new life, from the new man. So that the fruits of the old may not appear, and that the bond of peace, in the unity of the spirit, may be kept amongst you. So keep in this unity of the spirit, which is the bond of peace [Eph 4:3]; and none to break their peace, and go into the ill behaviour; for that is out of the spirit of God and Christ, which is meek, gentle, &c. So that the Lord God of your lives may be glorified in you all, and above all, who is over all, God blessed for ever and ever.

G. F.

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