

Epistle 34

by George Fox

George Fox's Epistle 34 emphasizes the importance of living in the light of Christ to avoid deception and condemnation.

Scripture: Jeremiah 23:18, John 1:9, John 3:19, John 8:12, John 11:9, Romans 3:27, 2 Corinthians 4:6, 2 Timothy 3:5, Revelation 17:6

Topics: "Inner Light", "False Teachings"

Description

George Fox emphasizes the importance of staying true to the light of Christ within each individual, warning against speaking presumptuously about God out of fear or pride. He urges the congregation to wait in the light, love it, and allow it to guide them away from wicked ways and false teachings. Those who turn away from the light and deny it, even if they profess the words of scripture, are condemned. Fox highlights the distinction between those who walk in the light of Christ and those who turn from it, likening the latter to harlots who deceive and persecute true believers.

Transcript

Friends, I do warn you in the presence of the living God, not to speak the things of God out of the fear of God, at random, in a presumptuous mind; for proud boasters are excluded [Rom 3:27, 2 Tim 3:2] out of the kingdom of God, and with the light of Christ condemned, and with the life, that gave forth the scriptures, are they judged. Therefore to you this is the word of the Lord, in the light, which Christ hath enlightened every one of you withal [John 1:9], wait in it, and love it, and ye shall have the light of life [John 8:12]; and it will bring you to stand in the counsel of God [Jer 23:18], and keep you from all wicked ways. And with it ye will see all the enchanters, false prophets, who speak a divination of their own brain [Jer 27:9/14:14], whose minds are turned from the light of Christ; with this light are they condemned. All whose minds are turned from it, and hate it, whose deeds are evil, with this light are they condemned [John 3:19f]; though they may make a profession of the words which proceeded from the light, from them who lived in it, and walked in it. So they that turn from it, and hate this light, making a profession of their words that dwelt in it, and hate them that walk in the light now, (Oh, high deceit!) all such are to be condemned with the light. And such that hate the light, and deny it, though they may profess the words, that did proceed from the life, and be full of them, they turn no people from their wicked ways [2 Chr 7:14]; for in the counsel of God they stand not. For they were in the counsel of God, who gave forth the scriptures, who were in the life of them, from which the letter did proceed.

Therefore in the life, (every one in your measures,) wait and walk, which gave forth the scriptures, which will open them to you again; else you all I do deny, and ye are to be turned away from, as having the form, but not the power [2 Tim 3:5]. And know the life of God in one another, and the power of God in one another; but that knowledge in the form without the life we deny, though it be never so finely painted, and the harlot be never so beautiful, who is turned from the light, which Christ hath enlightened withal. This is the harlot, who dresseth herself with the words that proceeded from the light, who persecuteth them who dwell in the light, who drinketh the blood of the saints [Rev 17:6], who dwell in the life which gave forth the scriptures. And with the words that proceeded from the light, doth she clothe herself, and is harlotted from the life; and all that she brings forth, is contrary to the light. So she is called the mother of harlots [Rev 17:5]. But if ye love this light, and your minds be guided by it to see the face of Jesus [2 Cor 4:6], and him the head, then with this light ye will see all the harlots, and the mother of harlots, and where she is, and what she is joined to [1 Cor 6:16]. The light is that, by which ye come to see; he that walketh in it, stumbleth not [John 11:9]. But thou stumblest, who art turned from the light among the harlots. I charge you every one in the presence of the living God, to take heed to the light. It is your teacher, loving it; it is your condemnation, hating it.

G. F.

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