

Epistle 345

by George Fox

The sermon emphasizes the importance of suffering for Christ's sake, living in the spirit, and pleasing God through faith, leading to the bond of heavenly peace and the mind of Christ.

Scripture: Matthew 5:10, Luke 23:34, John 1:4, Romans 5:2, Galatians 5:25, Galatians 6:8, Ephesians 4:3, Philippians 1:29, Hebrews 12:1, 1 John 5:4

Topics: "Suffering For Christ", "Faith and Perseverance"

Description

George Fox encourages believers to endure suffering with patience and faith, reminding them that their trials are a part of their journey in Christ, who overcame the world. He emphasizes the importance of submitting one's will to God and living in the Spirit, which leads to eternal life and unity among believers. Fox highlights that true suffering for Christ is marked by love and charity, urging his listeners to pray for their persecutors and embody the mind of Christ, who forgave even in the face of suffering. He reassures them that their sufferings will ultimately serve a greater purpose in establishing them on the rock of life.

Transcript

My dear friends,--To whom is my love in the everlasting seed, that reigns over all, and will overcome all your persecutors, and the devil, that is the cause thereof, who fighteth against the light, (which is the life in Christ,) [John 1:4] as they did against him in the flesh, above sixteen hundred years ago.

And now, my friends, suffer as lambs in the time of your sufferings; let all your wills be subjected with the patience that hath the victory; and run the race, and obtain the crown of life [Heb 12:1/1 Cor 9:24f]; and be willing to go to suffer for Christ's sake; for the apostle said, 'It is not only given you to believe, but also to suffer for his name sake [Phil 1:29], in whom you have salvation [Phil 1:28?];' for 'they that suffer for righteousness' sake are blessed, and theirs is the kingdom of God [Mat 5:10];' and by faith the holy men of God had victory [1 Jn 5:4], as you may see at large in Heb. xi [Heb 11]. So nothing is overcome by any man's will, but by faith that giveth access to God [Rom 5:2], in which they do please God [Heb 11:6]. And I do believe that all your sufferings will be for good, for your establishing upon the holy rock of life, which was the rock of all the sufferers, the prophets, and the apostles, who is the anointed saviour, to the answering that of God in all people; for the Lord hath a great work and seed in that place. So live in the spirit [Gal 5:25], that mortifieth all, and circumciseth all, and baptizeth all; so that with the spirit you may sow to the spirit, and of the spirit reap life everlasting [Gal 6:8].

And my desire is, that you may all be kept alive to God, and live in the living unity of the spirit, which is the bond of the heavenly peace, that passeth the knowledge [Eph 4:3/Phil 4:7/Eph 3:19] of the world; which peace brings such joys which transcend all your sufferings, and will carry you above them. And so in love to God, and in love to your persecutors, you can pray for them who persecute you [Mat 5:44]; and this suffering is above all the sufferings in the world, which are without love and charity [1 Cor 13:4], who maketh one another to suffer, when they get the upper hand. But such are not the sufferers for the true Lord Jesus, who suffered; though he was above all, yet he made none to suffer; and when he was reviled, he reviled not again [1 Pet 2:23], but said, 'Father, forgive them [Luke 23:34];' and committed himself to him that judgeth righteously [1 Pet 2:23]. So let the same mind be in you as was in Christ Jesus [Phil 2:5]; for the apostle said, that they had the mind of Christ [1 Cor 2:16], and the Lamb overcame, and had the victory [Rev 17:14]; and this his sanctified ones, that follow him, are partakers of. Glory to his name for ever. Amen.

G. F.

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