

Epistle 370

by George Fox

We can be confident in God's love and power in the midst of sufferings, and we should respond with faith, unity, and love.

Scripture: Matthew 5:10, Matthew 10:29, John 10:15, Romans 8:38, Romans 12:20, 2 Corinthians 6:2, Ephesians 2:6, Hebrews 7:27, 1 Peter 4:14

Topics: "Persecution", "Faithfulness"

Description

George Fox preaches to friends in prison and sufferers in the county, reminding them of the eternal power and peace they have in Christ Jesus. He encourages them to remain steadfast in faith, knowing that nothing can separate them from the love of God. Fox urges them to endure persecution for righteousness' sake, rejoicing in their reward in heaven and glorifying God in their sufferings.

Transcript

Dear friends, that are in prison, and all Friends and sufferers that are in the county, to whom is my love in the Lord's eternal power, and seed of life, that reigns over all, in whom you have peace with God, and riches that are everlasting.

Now, dear friends, your sufferings have been long in that county, and great have been your trials, and spoiling of your goods, through your dversaries' and persecutors' rage against you; but the Lord's secret hand and power is that which hath upheld you through all to himself; And therefore we may say, 'What shall separate us from the love of God that we have in Christ Jesus? Shall tribulations, persecutions, powers, or principalities, thrones or dominions? Nay, there is not any thing able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus [Rom 8:38f], whom you have chosen: a priest that is from above, not from below, who has offered up himself to God for you [Heb 7:27], who is not like the Jews' priests, that had the tithes of the people [Heb 7:5] for offering up their outward offerings, and such like services. So you have a priest from heaven, that is made higher than the heavens [Heb 7:26], and is the prophet that God has raised up like Moses, whom you are to hear [Acts 3:22] in his light, grace, and truth. And he is your shepherd from heaven, who has laid down his life for his sheep [John 10:15], who is above all the earthly shepherds below; and this shepherd will feed you with that which is heavenly. And he is your bishop [1 Pet 2:25] from heaven, to oversee you, that you may be kept from sitting down in any earthly place with your minds, spirits, and souls, but only to sit down in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus [Eph 2:6], who is the heavenly and spiritual bishop, who lives for evermore [Rev 1:18], the first and last, the beginning and

ending [Rev 22:13], who is the first-born of every creature [Col 1:15], and the first begotten from the dead [Rev 1:5], who does quicken, and makes alive [1 Cor 15:45,22], and begets from the death, and makes them to sit together (whom he has made alive) in the heavenly places in himself.

And now, dear friends, I do feel the Lord's eternal power present with you in all your sufferings, how it hath and doth support you; and therefore let your faith be steadfast in the power of God, which will keep you all unto the day of salvation [2 Cor 6:2]. And that you may all be valiant and faithful for God's truth upon the earth [Jer 9:3] in this day of trial and persecution, from both teachers, professors, and profane, which are below, whose persecuting spirit will have but a time. And therefore be of good faith; for a sparrow shall not fall to the ground without the will of the Father; and ye are of more value than many sparrows [Mat 10:29,31]. And 'Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.' For so the old persecutors persecuted the prophets and apostles before you [Mat 5:10-12]. But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings [1 Pet 4:13]; for the spirit of glory, and of God, rests upon you [1 Pet 4:14], who are railed upon [Mark 15:29], and suffer for his name sake [Acts 9:16]. And though he is evil spoken of by your persecutors, but on your part he is glorified [1 Pet 4:14], that suffer for his name. And therefore let none be ashamed to suffer as a christian, but let him glorify God [1 Pet 4:16] in his sufferings, who doth support him.

And so, dear friends, live in love and unity, and be kind, and courteous, and tender hearted one towards another; yea, and to all your persecutors, that you may heap coals of fire upon their heads; and so overcome evil with good [Rom 12:20f]. And so the God of all peace establish you all upon his heavenly rock and foundation of life, (Christ Jesus,) which standeth sure [2 Tim 2:19], and cannot be moved [Heb 12:28]. And so with my love to you all in the holy seed, in which all nations are blest [Gen 22:18/Gal 3:8]. And in this seed, the Lord God Almighty keep and preserve you, which bruises the head of the evil seed [Gen 3:15], that makes you to suffer. And the Lord God Almighty arm you with his armour, and strengthen you, that you may be able to stand to his glory, and that he may be glorified in and among you. Amen. So fare ye well in the Lord.

G. F.

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