

Epistle 372

by George Fox

Christ's government is established in the hearts of believers through his grace and truth, and believers must walk in the light to receive salvation.

Scripture: Isaiah 9:7, John 1:9-12, Romans 4:25, 1 Corinthians 15:47, Hebrews 2:10, 1 John 5:10, Revelation 22:13

Topics: "Christ's Government", "Spiritual Unity"

Description

George Fox preaches about Christ's government and peace reigning in the hearts of believers, emphasizing that those who accept Christ's light and life come under His rule, while those who reject His light reject His order and justice. He highlights the importance of receiving Christ's grace and truth, which leads to salvation and establishes His government in the hearts of His followers. Fox stresses the significance of being led by the Spirit of God, being baptized into one body, and keeping unity in the spirit to experience Christ's established peaceable government.

Transcript

Concerning the government of Christ, and his peace, 'of the increase of which there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and justice, from henceforth and for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this [Isa 9:7].'

Now Christ Jesus, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven [1 Cor 15:47], it is he who rules, and reigns, and governs in the hearts of his saints, who are the believers in his light, (the life in him,) who is their governor and counsellor [Isa 9:6], who died for their sins [1 Cor 15:3], and is risen for their justification [Rom 4:25], and is the captain of salvation [Heb 2:10].

And Christ's government in the hearts of his people [Jer 31:33?], is by his grace and truth, that comes from Christ Jesus [John 1:17], by whom all things were made [John 1:3], who doth enlighten every man that cometh into the world [John 1:9], which light is the life in him [John 1:4]; he saith, 'Believe in the light, that you may become the children of the light [John 12:36];' and such have the light of life, and by it come under Christ's government and peace, and his order in his light and life. Now, they that hate his light, they hate the life in Christ the heavenly man; and such will hate Christ by whom all things were made and created; and hate his order, and his justice, and judgment, and his light and life: and such are not like to come into his established government and kingdom; so Christ, who is the governor, the counsellor, the orderer, he orders and governs with his light (his life) in the hearts of all the believers in the light; and all the believers in the light, have the witness in themselves [1 Jn 5:10], of Christ their ruler, counsellor [Isa

9:6], orderer, heavenly governor, and of his judgment, justice, and peace; and that of the increase of his government there is no end.

Now, they that hate the light, which is the life in Christ the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, they are those that would not have Christ rule over them, nor in them; therefore it condemns them [John 3:19f]. . . . and all such haters of Christ, his light, life, order, government, and counsel, are in a false liberty, though they may profess Christ or his government in words, yet not believing in the light, and walking in the light (the life of Christ) they have no true fellowship one with another [1 Jn 1:7], but are in confusion; and have no true fellowship with the believers in the light (the life in Christ) nor with the son, and the Father [1 Jn 1:3]; for, how should they? For, until they come to believe in the light, (the life in the second Adam,) they cannot see their own states, they are in a blind state; for none see, nor enter into the kingdom of God, till they are born again [John 3:3,5]; and those that are born again, are the believers in the light (the life in Christ) and so become children of the light [John 12:36], grafted into Christ [Rom 11:17]; and such do know and see the true liberty in Christ Jesus, the second Adam: all such do see, and know, that all false liberty is out of the light, (the life in the second Adam,) in old Adam in the transgression.

And Christ that doth enlighten every man that cometh into the world, (which is the life in him,) such come to Christ, and are grafted into him the head, and so hold Christ their head, by whom all things were made and created; who is over all, from everlasting to everlasting, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending [Rev 22:13]. These are they that see his order, his government, and his rule in their hearts, and receive his law of spirit and life, and live and walk in it, which makes them free from the law of sin and death. These see Christ to be the author and finisher of their holy, divine, precious faith [Heb 12:2]. And their faith stands in Christ, who is the author of it, 'who hath all power in heaven and earth given to him [Mat 28:18].' And the mystery of this faith they hold in a pure conscience [1 Tim 3:9], and do know the law of this faith [Rom 3:27], and the law of love that God hath shed in their hearts [Rom 5:3] through Jesus Christ. And so in this light, faith, and life, that they have from Jesus the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, they come all to be of one faith [Eph 4:5], of one light, and one life; and so of one mind, heart, and judgment, in this new covenant of light and life [Isa 42:6, Mal 2:5]; so in it they are under the government, and counsel, and order of Jesus, that he establishes in his everlasting covenant [2 Sam 23:5] of light and life in their hearts.

The law came by Moses, and all the Jews were to be under the law in the old covenant; and this law served till Christ (the seed) came, in his new covenant. He is come, and now grace and truth are come by Jesus Christ [John 1:17], the great governor. And now, this grace and this truth is come from him, into the hearts of all his believers.

And with and in this grace and truth, Christ rules in the hearts of them that receive his grace and truth; and with this grace and truth, and in it, every believer and saint receiveth Christ their governor, and his order, and his counsel, and heavenly judgment, and justice from the heavenly man, in his established government, which he establishes with his grace and truth. Now this grace of God which brings salvation, which hath appeared unto all men [Tit 2:11], which does manifest, that all men have a day of grace and favour: now this must needs be the special grace of God, which brings salvation, which hath appeared unto all men. Now then, not receiving this grace and favour of God, but turning from this grace into wantonness [Jude 1:4], and walking despitefully against the spirit of grace [Heb 10:29]; therein they are hardened, and blind, and turn that into wantonness, and walk despitefully against it; which should teach them, and bring their salvation. . . .

The Lord spoke by his prophet Joel, 'that it shall come to pass in the last days, that God will pour out of his spirit upon all flesh [Joel 2:28],' &c. Joel ii. 28.

And Peter said, 'This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, it shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) that I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants, and on my handmaids, I will pour out in those days of my spirit, and they shall prophesy [Acts 2:17f].' Acts ii. 17, 18. . . .

It is said in the old covenant, that God did pour out of his spirit upon the house of Israel, and the house of Judah [Ezek 39:29]. But in the days of the new covenant of light and grace, God poured out of his spirit upon all flesh, both Jews and Gentiles. Now all flesh must come to the spirit of God, and be led and guided by it, if they will see Christ's heavenly spiritual government and order; and with this spirit, to know Christ the spiritual man, to rule and govern in their hearts. And all that by this spirit are circumcised, they eat of the heavenly passover, or their bread from heaven. And all that are baptized with the spirit, are baptized into one body, and do all drink into one spirit [1 Cor 12:13]. So here they are one, in this spiritual fellowship, which is the true church-fellowship; even that church which is in God [1 Th 1:1], the pillar and ground of truth [1 Tim 3:15], which church Christ is the heavenly and spiritual head of [Col 1:18]; and well he may, for he is the author of their faith [Heb 12:2], and the author of their light, and life, grace, and truth, and spirit, and gospel of peace and salvation; by which he rules in the hearts of his living members, the church. And all they that grieve, vex, quench, and rebel against the spirit [Eph 4:30/Isa 63:10/1 Th 5:19], come to be blind, as the Jews, and will not see with their eyes, nor hear with their ears, nor perceive with their hearts [Isa 6:9f/Deut 29:4]; and such may profess Christ in the new testament, and the apostles' words, and the government, and order of Christ; as the Jews did profess the old testament, and Christ to come; but they would not receive him then, when he was come [John 1:11]. No more do they now, that profess he is come, who vex and quench his spirit, and grieve it, and rebel against it, and err from it [Isa 29:24]. And such are not like to receive Christ into their hearts, nor come into his heavenly order, and establish peaceable government, as those that are led by the spirit of God, which are the sons of God [Rom 8:14], and keep the unity of the spirit; which holy spirit is the bond of peace [Eph 4:3] amongst all Christ's subjects, lambs, and sheep, that feed together in the pasture of life. For it is God that gives the heavenly understanding of Christ's established government and order. And they that quench, and vex, and rebel against the spirit of God, will rebel against Christ's established government and order, and his people that are in it, that are led by the spirit of wisdom and understanding [Isa 11:2], and a sound mind [2 Tim 1:7]. And such as will not hear the spirit of God in themselves, will neither hear God nor Christ, nor his sheep, nor such as he sends, but rebel against them.

Now the gospel being preached to, or in, every creature under heaven [Col 1:23]; which gospel is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believes [Rom 1:16]; so all that receive this gospel, the power of God unto salvation, in their hearts, receive Christ, (the power of God [1 Cor 1:24].) and his government and order in the power. And Christ reigns in their hearts in his power; and such come into the gospel order; and they that come to be heirs of the gospel, the power of God to salvation, are heirs of Christ's peaceable established government, and are true subjects to Christ's power, and established peaceable government; and so this gospel, the power of God to salvation, is peaceable, joyful, and comfortable, which is the gospel of Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven [1 Cor 15:47]; and is not called the gospel of old Adam in transgression. And this gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, keeps all that believe in it, in the everlasting joy, peace, and comfort, and in order; for it is the everlasting gospel

[Rev 14:6], which brings life and immortality to light [2 Tim 1:10], by which they see over the devil, and before he was, that hath blinded them, and darkened them from life and immortality. So in this gospel that hath brought life and immortality to light in God's people, both men and women, they are established in the order of it, in which they do serve the eternal everlasting God of truth.

Now all they that do not receive the gospel of Christ, the power of God to salvation, which is preached to every, or in every creature under heaven, life and immortality are not brought to light in them; and such the God of the world hath blinded [2 Cor 4:4].

And all you that have received it, have received the comfort of it; and those that disobey and rebel against the gospel, the power of God, such disobey and rebel against God and Christ, and his government, and his people who are in the order of the gospel, the power of God. And as it is said, 'Christ is in you, except you be reprobates [2 Cor 13:5];' and all that receives Christ in them, it is by his light, (which is the life in him [John 1:4],) and the grace and truth that comes by Jesus [John 1:17], and the faith that he is the author of [Heb 12:2], and his spirit and gospel. This they must receive in their hearts, if they receive Christ in them.

And Christ said to his disciples and followers, that 'he would send them the spirit of truth, (the comforter,) which should proceed from the Father [John 15:26] and the son, which should lead them into all truth [John 16:13]; and he should reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment [John 16:8]. . . . And so every one is to have oil in your own lamps [Mat 25:1-10], from the heavenly olive tree, that your lamps may burn always, both night and day, in your tabernacles [Lev 24:2,4], looking to your high priest, who will feed your lamps with heavenly oil.

And every one have heavenly salt in yourselves [Mark 9:50] to savour withal, what is earthly, and what is heavenly; and what is from below, and what is from above; and what is out of the truth, and what is in the truth.

And that every one may keep their own vine in their own garden, and their own lily in their own field, or orchard; which lily doth exceed Solomon in all his glory [Mat 6:20f]. And every one have the word of faith in their hearts and mouths, to obey and do [Rom 10:8/Deut 30:14], which will sanctify [John 17:17, Eph 5:26], and make you holy, and reconcile you to God [2 Cor 5:19].

And every one have the anointing, or unction, within you, which you have from the Father, or Holy One [1 Jn 2:27/20]; so that in it you may continue in the Father, and in the son.

And every one continue in the grace of God, which will teach you how to live, and what to deny, and will bring your salvation [Tit 2:11f], and establish you upon Christ, the rock and foundation [1 Cor 3:11], from whence the grace does come.

And every one abide in the holy, divine, and precious faith, which you do hold in a pure conscience [1Tim 3:9], by which faith you do live, and have victory [1 Jn 5:4] over that which displeaseth God: and in this faith you do please God [Heb 11:6], which Jesus Christ, the Lord from heaven [1 Cor 15:47], is the author and finisher of [Heb 12:2].

And every one that hath digged deep, and found the pearl of great price; and hath sold all, and purchased the field, then the field and pearl is your own [Mat 13:44-46]: such do know a thorough redemption.

And all you believers in the light, (which is the life in Christ,) that are become the children of light [John 12:36], walk in the light [1 Jn 1:7], and in Christ, as you have received him.

And every one mind the heavenly leaven, that will leaven you into a new lump [1 Cor 5:6].

And every one keep the feast of Christ our passover [1 Cor 5:7], with his heavenly unleavened bread, in sincerity and truth [1 Cor 5:8].

And every one mind the light, that God hath commanded to shine out of darkness, and hath shined into your hearts, 'to give you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ [2 Cor 4:6] , (your saviour,) that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of yourselves;' in this you are sensible of his heavenly treasure in your earthly vessels [2 Cor 4:7]; and every one have water in your own wells and cisterns [Prov 5:16], and heavenly fruit on your trees, which God hath planted.

Nebuchadnezzar, though his greatness reached to heaven, as a tree, yet he was to be 'hewn down, [Dan 4:22f] until he knew that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men [Dan 4:25]: and the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people [Dan 2:44].' Dan. ii. 44. 'And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth [Dan 2:35].' Ver. 35.

'They shall not hurt nor destroy in my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. [Isa 11:9]' Isa. xi. 9.

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