

Epistle 378

by George Fox

George Fox's Epistle 378 emphasizes the necessity of having a receptive heart to God's word and living by the faith of Christ to bear fruit in our lives.

Scripture: Matthew 13:3-8, Matthew 24:13, Luke 8:13-15, Romans 1:17, Romans 5:2, Hebrews 10:38, Hebrews 11:6, Hebrews 12:2

Topics: "Faith", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

George Fox emphasizes the importance of being receptive to the word of God, as illustrated in the parable of the sower. He warns that many receive the word with joy but lack deep roots, leading to their downfall during trials and tribulations. Fox encourages believers to examine the condition of their hearts and the fruit they produce, urging them to cultivate good ground that yields a bountiful harvest. He highlights that true faith, which is authored and perfected by Christ, is essential for salvation and pleasing God. Ultimately, he calls for perseverance in faith to avoid drawing back into perdition.

Transcript

And now, friends, with the eternal power, and heavenly light of Christ, with it you have seen, and do see, and will see, that which Christ hath spoken, Matt. xiii. and Luke viii. which he taught to the great multitude in parables, when he sat in a ship [Mat 13:2f]; 'Behold,' saith Christ, 'a sower went out to sow his seed, and as he sowed, some fell by the highway side, and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it: and some fell upon the rocks, or stony places, where they had not much earth, and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away. [Mat 13:3-6]' So he that receiveth the seed into rocky and stony places, the same is he that receiveth the word with joy, yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for awhile, or for awhile believeth, and in temptations falleth away [Luke 8:13]; for when tribulations or persecutions arise because of the word, by and by he is offended [Mat 13:21]; and upon too many such have we seen this parable fulfilled in times of persecutions, and tribulations, and sufferings; when the heat of persecution is up, they are scorched, and withered away, and so come to nothing. 'And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up and choked it [Mat 13:7].' 'And they also that received seed among the thorns, are they that hear the word, and when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with the cares of this world, and deceitfulness of riches, and pleasures of this life, and become unfruitful, and bring no fruit to perfection [Mat 13:22 / Luke 8:14]. And this is seen to be the condition of too many. But the other 'fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred fold [Mat 13:8].' So they that received the seed into the good ground, are they who (in an honest and good heart)

have heard the word, and understand it, and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience [Luke 8:15], some a hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty, as was said before. And therefore let all consider what ground you are, and what fruit you bring forth; and when ye hear the word of the kingdom, that ye understand it, which none can, without the light and spirit of Christ, (and walk in it,) but he that shall endure to the end in the light, in the grace, truth, and spirit, and in Christ, from whom you do receive these, shall be saved [Mat 24:13].

For the apostle saith, 'The just man lives by faith [Rom 1:17].' And this is not by any faith which men make, but by the faith which Christ Jesus is both the author and finisher of [Heb 12:1], in your hearts and consciences; and in this faith ye have access to God [Rom 5:2], and do please him [Heb 11:6]. But, 'if any man draw back,' (to wit, in not living by this faith,) doth not the Lord say, 'My soul shall have no pleasure in him [Heb 10:38]?' But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, (that is a sad drawing back,) but of them that believe, to the saving of our souls.

G. F.

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