

# Epistle 398

by George Fox

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*George Fox's Epistle 398 emphasizes the importance of faith, endurance in suffering, and the transformative power of God's love and presence in believers' lives.*

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 9:3

**Topics:** "Faith Endurance", "Christian Perseverance"

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## Description

George Fox preaches about the unbound nature of the word of God, encouraging believers to stand valiantly for God's truth and name, even in the face of suffering and trials. He emphasizes the gift of faith and the endurance required to follow Christ, reminding them of the support and sanctification God provides in all circumstances. Fox urges believers to bless their enemies, hold fast to goodness, and trust in God's everlasting love and power, which brings life and salvation. He concludes by exhorting them to manifest the virtues of true Christianity in their behavior and confession of Christ before others.

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## Transcript

'The word of God is not bound [2 Tim 2:9].' 2 Tim. ii. 9.

Dear friends, in the seed of life that is over all, whom the Lord doth support, and hath supported by his eternal arm and power to stand for his glory; be valiant for his truth and his name upon the earth [Jer 9:3], who is God all-sufficient and almighty over all to support you all, and to supply you with all things needful. Now, dear friends, it is not only given you to believe in the name of Christ, but also to suffer for his name' sake [Phil 1:29]; so you see and know, it is a gift given you to believe, and a gift to suffer for Christ's sake, and his righteousness; but, however, as Christ saith, 'Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves;' for Christ's believers are as sheep or lambs among wolves [Mat 10:16], he hath declared that they shall be brought before counsels, and before rulers, for his name' sake [Mat 10:17f]: But Christ bids his disciples, 'take no thought of what they shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: for it is not you that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you [Mat 10:19f];' and this spirit of the Father is sufficient to trust to, for it shall answer all, if they have ears to hear, and comfort his people, his lambs and sheep.

And Christ further said, speaking to his disciples, 'Ye shall be hated of all men for my name sake; but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved [Mat 10:22];' and 'he that heareth you, (to wit, Christ's sheep,) heareth me,' saith Christ; 'and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, (namely Christ,) and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me [Luke 10:16];' (to wit, the Father.) Matt. x. Luke x. 'And the

disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord [Mat 10:24];' for Christ, the lord and master of the sheep, was despised; so it is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord; 'for if they call the master of the house (namely Christ) Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? [Mat 10:25] But the very hairs of your head are all numbered: fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows, and not one of them shall fall to the ground without the heavenly Father [Mat 10:29-31].'

See here Christ encourages his lambs and sheep; therefore stand in his will. And if the Lord suffer you, who are his lambs, and sheep, and are as doves and chickens, that Christ hath gathered under his wings [Mat 23:37], and none are able to pluck you out of his hands [John 10:28], (his power,) who hath all power in heaven and earth given to him [Mat 28:18]. And now if it be the will of the Lord to try you, his lambs and sheep, by spoiling of your outward goods, as he did his servant Job [Job 1 - 2], and others of his servants and children, in the days of the apostles, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods [Heb 10:34]; and Moses by faith chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season; esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt; for he had an eye to the recompense of reward [Heb 11:25f]; as in Heb. xi.

And therefore, consider how Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by faith served the Lord, and went through sufferings and trials; and Jeremiah, and the rest of the prophets, through faith went through great sufferings and imprisonments; and Daniel, and the three children, passed through great sufferings and trials by faith [Dan 6, 3); so faith was their victory [1 Jn 5:4], which was the gift of God [Eph 2:8], which Christ is the author and finisher of [Heb 12:2]. And you read in the days of the apostles, what sufferings and imprisonments they were carried through by faith; and since the apostles' days, how all the martyrs were carried through great sufferings and imprisonments by their faith, which was their victory; in which faith they pleased God [Heb 11:6], and had victory over the devil; and in which faith they were all in unity [Eph 4:13].

Now, dear friends and brethren, if it doth please the Lord to try you, who are the believers in the light [John 12:36], and children of the light and the day [1 Th 5:5] of Christ: I say again, if it please the Lord, and it be his will, to try you in stinking prisons and dungeons, Bridewells, houses of correction, and suffer you to be put in such places, who are his sheep and lambs, plants and branches; I say, the Lord can sanctify all such places for his people, his children, his sons and daughters, and make all pleasant to them: for his sheep and people cannot go any where from the Lord, for the Lord and his presence is with them [Psa 139:7], and the angel of his presence saves them [Isa 63:9]; and therefore such jails and dungeons, Bridewells, houses of correction, which are for evil doers, if the Lord do try, or suffer his people to be put in such places, yet his people are all in the hand, and under the wings of Christ, and he can sanctify all such places to them. And you, in that state, are to pray for the enemies that put you there; and if they curse and hate you, you are to bless them, and to do good unto them, and you are to pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you, and love your enemies, that you may be children of your Father which is in heaven; 'for he maketh the sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and causeth his rain to fall on the just and on the unjust [Mat 5:44f].' And the apostle saith to the believers, 'Try all things, hold fast that which is good [1 Th 5:21];' so you holding fast that which is good, with that you can try all things, whether they be good or bad; 'and be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good [Rom 12:21]:' this is the command. . . . And a good man, David saith, 'He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour [Psa 112:9].' 'They that choose the things that please the Lord, and keep his covenant, even them will I give a name in my house, and within

my walls, a place and a name, better than of sons and daughters, saith the Lord, and I will give them an everlasting name, which shall not be cut off.' Isa. lvi. So you may see how the Lord doth encourage his people to walk in the truth, in faithfulness to him; for the Lord hath loved his people with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness hath he, and doth he draw them [Jer 31:3] unto himself, to serve and worship him. Jer. xxxi. And Christ saith, 'He that believeth on him hath everlasting life [John 3:16].' Mark, hath it, as in John. And again Christ saith, 'He that drinketh of the water that I give, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give, shall be in him as a well of water springing up to eternal life [John 4:14].' So every one mind this well in you, who have drunk of the water which Christ hath given you.

And the apostle saith, 'God will punish them that disobey his gospel with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power [2 Th 1:8f].' 2 Thess. i. 9. Here you may see everlasting destruction to the wicked, that disobey the gospel; and everlasting life to them that believe and obey the gospel of Christ. Now they that disobey the gospel of Christ, refuse their own comfort and joy of life and salvation; which gospel is the power of God [Rom 1:16], which is preached to every creature under heaven [Col 1:23] to believe and obey; therefore happy are you who have received it, and obeyed it, which brings life and immortality to light [2 Tim 1:10] in you; that you see over the enemy which darkened you, and are now become heirs of this comfortable and joyful gospel of life and everlasting salvation; in which everlasting gospel [Rev 14:6] you have an everlasting glorious fellowship; and in this everlasting gospel, you can praise the everlasting God, that reigns over all from everlasting to everlasting. And all that are of the seed and faith of David, can say as David said, 'Blessed be God from everlasting to everlasting; and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the Lord [Psa 106:48].' And further can say, that 'the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon all them that fear him and his righteousness, unto the children of men [Psa 103:17].' Psalm ciii. 17. For the Lord God he changeth not, he is the same that he was, who inhabits eternity, and dwells in the humble heart [Isa 57:15]; and therefore you humble ones, fear, and serve, and worship him. And keep under the wing of Christ, and in him your sanctuary and saviour, who destroys the destroyer, and is over all, the first and last [Rev 22:13]. Amen.

Dear friends, who are under sufferings for the name [Acts 5:41] of the Lord Jesus Christ, and for his new and living way [Heb 10:20], and his pure, undefiled religion [Jas 1:27], and his worship in the spirit and truth [John 4:24], that Christ who is from above, and hath all power in heaven and earth [Mat 28:18], hath set up, for all the followers of the Lamb to walk in his new and living way, and to keep in his pure, undefiled religion and worship, in spirit and in truth.

And now, dear friends and brethren, my desire is, that you may show forth the nature of the Lamb, and the virtue and the life, in which the nobility of true christianity is seen and manifested in your peaceable, modest, and virtuous behaviour, before the powers that you are brought before; and that none are to question or take thought what they are to say; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak [Mat 10:19f], saith Christ; 'whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. [Mat 10:32] For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation [Rom 10:10].' Rom. x. 10. 'And every tongue shall confess to God [Rom 14:11].' Rom. xiv. 11. And again, the apostle saith, that 'every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father [Phil 2:11].' Philip. ii. 10. So we cannot but confess and declare what our eyes have seen, and our ears have heard, and our hands have handled of the word of life [1 Jn 1:1], Christ Jesus, by whom all things were made and created [John 1:3]. . . .

And so, dear friends, be of one mind, and heart, and spirit, and God Almighty arm you with patience and humility; who is God all-sufficient, to give you dominion with his power, and to support you. And so, with

my love to you all in the Lord Jesus Christ. And let your moderation appear unto all men [Phil 4:5]; for wisdom is justified of her children [Mat 11:19]. And what any one of you doth want, God is all-sufficient to supply you; trust in him, and in fear walk before him.

G. F.

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