

# Epistle 47

by George Fox

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of walking in the light, avoiding imitation, and standing firm in one's faith, with a focus on unity and diversity in the church.*

**Scripture:** Acts 8:23

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Christian Unity"

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## Description

George Fox preaches about dwelling in the light of Christ to learn of Him in life, allowing the spirit of life to move against the works of death and bring freedom. He emphasizes the importance of knowing and following the spirit that exercises meekness, truth, and faithfulness, breaking the bonds of iniquity and scattering evil influences. Fox warns against imitating others blindly, urging each individual to focus on their own spiritual growth to maintain peace and unity. He highlights the diversity of gifts but the unity in the spirit, cautioning against judging different paths as God has various ways to lead His people. Fox encourages believers to silence their fleshly desires, purify their ways, and embrace the mystery of godliness through deep spiritual growth.

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## Transcript

All Friends every where, who with the light that never changeth, are convinced, and turned from darkness [Acts 26:18], in the light dwell, that ye may come to learn of Christ in the life, and with it know the movings of the spirit of life in you, that moves against all the works of death, and so works freedom. A measure of this living spirit and power being known in every one, and ye kept to it, with it ye are kept diligent, quick, and lively, to walk in the life; for it is the life that redeems, which only overcomes, and gives an entrance into rest. Therefore every one of you know a measure of that spirit, which exerciseth meekness, truth, and faithfulness in you in power, which, as it is known, breaks the bonds of iniquity [Acts 8:23/Isa 58:6], and scatters the armies of the aliens [Heb 11:34]; that ye may all know, what it is to follow the Lamb with joy and peace in your minds, your hearts upright to your guide. Take heed that none of you walk by imitation of others only. For though the way they walk in be good to them who are in the light, yet thou art in darkness, and knowest not whither thou goest [John 12:35], nor canst ever receive any strength from God to carry thee on in the way, nor reward for it; and thy fellowship is not with God in that way, but with men, and in this way thou canst not be cleansed, but in the end thy labour will be lost. And of this sort are they that turn back, and speak evil of the way of God, when the way of God they never came into, nor his life, peace, and power; that is a way they never knew. By these the offence comes, and the stumbling block, whereby many are offended: but wo to such by whom the offence comes [Mat 18:7]!

And take heed of judging the measures of others, but every one mind your own; and there ye famish the busy minds and high conceits, and so peace springs up among you, and division is judged. And this know, that there are diversities of gifts, but one spirit [1 Cor 12:4], and unity therein to all who with it are guided. And though the way seems to thee diverse; yet judge not the way, lest thou judge the Lord, and knowest not that several ways (seeming to reason) hath God to bring his people out by; yet are all but one in the end. This is, that he may be looked to from all the 'ends of the earth, to be a guide and lawgiver;' and that none should judge before him [Mat 7:1? 2 Esd 7:19?]. Deep is the mystery of godliness [1 Tim 3:16]! Therefore silence all flesh [Zech 2:13], and see your own ways be clean [Psa 119:9]; and as ye grow therein, the way of peace [Isa 59:8] will be more prized by you, and the perfect bond ye will come to know. And all who are here established, shall stand in strength, when others fall on the right hand and on the left.

Dear friends, ye have long been convinced, and owned the Lord in word and form; and look for it, ye must be proved and tried, not only your faith and patience in persecution by the enemy without, (for that many of you have escaped,) but proved ye must all be with that which is nearer, even a falling away amongst yourselves. And it is good that the steadfastness of all should be known herein. For many are crept in unawares [Jude 1:4], who are 'self-ended, slow bellies [Tit 1:12], who love this world more than the cross of Christ, who are got high in the form, and have great swelling words [2 Pet 2:18, Jude 1:16],' which they can utter for their advantage in earthly things, deceiving the simple therewith [Rom 16:18], who are not yet got above the pollution of the world [2 Pet 2:20]. And this was ordained of old, for the manifesting of him that is approved [1 Cor 11:19]. And with that eye that leads out of the fall, is he seen to be fallen, who hath got the saints' words to plead for that which is in the fall to uphold it. And here the oppressor would set his seat faster than before, the devil being now transformed into the likeness of an angel of light [2 Cor 11:4]. And thus is the scripture fulfilled, 'My little children, this have I written to you, that when ye see this come to pass ye might not be amazed, as though some strange thing had befallen the church of God; but even the same that was of old, to prove you, and to perfect you against the devil: herein is he made manifest, that ye may know his wiles.' [This appears to be a made-up quote- based on 1 Pet 4:12?] And great steadfastness shall it produce to all, who mind their standing upon Christ the rock [Mat 7:26f], and have salt in themselves [Mark 9:50] to savour withal. But that which will not come to the everlasting foundation, is apt to be tossed to and fro [Eph 4:14] with airy spirits, who are now gone out into the world [1 Jn 4:1, Eph 2:2], to deceive such whose hearts look back after worldly things. Therefore stand with your minds girded up to God [1 Pet 1:13] above the world, lest ye run in vain [Gal 2:2?], and lose your crown; which none receives, but he that continues to the end [Rev 2:10].

G. F.

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