

To the Suffering Friends of Dantzic

by George Fox

The sermon encourages the suffering Friends of Dantzic to remain faithful to their Lord Jesus Christ and to walk wisely and lovingly in the face of persecution.

Scripture: Matthew 8:20, Romans 12:21, 1 Corinthians 13:7, Ephesians 4:15

Topics: "Persecution", "Faithfulness"

Description

George Fox preaches to the suffering friends of Dantzic, reminding them of Jesus Christ as their shepherd, priest, and high priest who sanctifies and protects them. He encourages them to stand firm in their faith, not compromising their gatherings or beliefs despite persecution, trusting in the Lord's power to support and strengthen them. Fox addresses the magistrates' attempts to disperse the believers, urging them to remain faithful to Christ's example and to respond with wisdom, gentleness, and love. He warns against being swayed by flattery and emphasizes the importance of overcoming evil with good, dwelling in God's unfailing love.

Transcript

To The Suffering Friends Of Dantzic (1684)

Friends, with my love in the Lord Jesus Christ to you, who is your saviour and prophet, that God has raised up for you, to hear in all things; your shepherd, that has laid down his life for you, whose voice ye must hear, who will feed you in his living pastures of life, who is your priest, that offered himself for you, who sanctifies you, that he might present you to God: so is become your high priest, who is made higher than the heavens; so is a higher priest than the priesthood of Aaron, and all the priesthoods upon the earth, that are made by men below: for he is a high priest, made higher than the heaven. Heb. vii. And so, is the chief shepherd and bishop of your souls, to oversee you, that you do not go astray from God, who is your sanctuary, in whom you are preserved from the destroyer; who destroys the devil, the great destroyer, and his works, and bruises his head, and breaks his power: he, namely, Christ, is your saviour; in him you have rest and peace, salvation, and life eternal.

Now, dear friends, we do hear and understand, that the magistrates have cast you into prison again in Dantzic; and that they have proffered you you liberty, upon condition that you would go away, or forsake your common meeting place, or divide yourselves into several little meetings. Truly, friends, we have had many of these proffers made to us within these twenty or thirty years, but we never durst make such bargains or covenants, to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as we sued to do; but did leave

our suffering cause wholly to the Lord Christ Jesus, in whose name we were gathered, who has all power in heaven and earth given unto him: and the Lord at last did and hath tendered the hearts of many of our persecutors both in England and in other places; and therefore in the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is good to be faithful; who is God all-sufficient to support and supply you all in whatever you do, and strengthen you in all conditions. For if that should get little advantage upon you, and get you into weakness, it would not rest so, but get more upon you. And therefore it is good to stand fast in the liberty in Christ Jesus, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who hath made you free out of the snares, and bondage, and limitations of the wills of the sons of old Adam.

And whereas the magistrates have alleged that Christ departed out of the coasts of Gadarenes upon their request, after he had cast the devils out of the possessed men (sic) and they entered into their swine, and run into the sea. this argument is of no weight, for you to go out of their coasts or city, who are settled citizens, and have wives and families; for Christ went up and down from place to place and preached; as he said, "The son of man hath not where to lay his head, though the subtle foxes had holes, and the high-flown fowls had their nests. " And would they take it kindly themselves, if the king of Poland, their protector, who is of a contrary profession, should use the same argument against to them, and say, begone, or else do not meet at your great public places of worship, but meet in small companies, or else to depart out of these coasts, as Christ did out of the coasts of the Gadarnees. And if you do not, then you are disobedient to Christ's example; as they do apply it upon you. and so, let them weight the matter and their argument with the just law of God, to do unto you as they would be done unto themselves.

And now, dear friends, I desire, however, that you walk wisely, and gently, and lovingly, and meekly, and soberly to all the magistrates, and all people, that they may have no just occasion in any thing against you. for the good must overcome the bad, as the apostle says, "Overcome evil with good," and dwell in that love that can bear all things, and endure all things. And nothing can separate you from this love which you have in God through Jesus Christ. In this love build up and edify one another, that by it you may answer the good in all people, and spread his truth abroad, and be valiant for that upon earth. So in his holy, peaceable truth, and his seed Christ Jesus, in which all nations are blest, God almighty preserve and keep you to his glory. Amen.

And now, dear friends, you that have stood such hard and cruel sufferings so long, for the Lord's name and truth, and could not be overcome by cruelty, take heed now lest you be overcome by fair words and flattery; for in that there is a greater danger.

G.F.

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