

George Fox's Epistles

Text from *Works* (1831), v 7-8, somewhat condensed with biblical references and allusions identified

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1. Dear friends,—With my love to you in the holy peaceable truth that never changes [Heb 13:8], nor admits of evil, but makes all free [John 8:32] that receive it, and that walk in it [3 Jn 1:4], and is over all the clouds without rain, and wells without water, and trees without fruit [Jude 1:12/2 Pet 1:17]. And from the truth floweth justice, equity, righteousness [1 Esd 4:39f], and godliness, mercy, and tenderness, that brings a man's heart, mind, soul, and spirit to the infinite and incomprehensible God, and from it a love flows to all the universal creation, and would have all to come to the knowledge of the truth [1 Tim 2:4]; and it bends every one to their utmost ability to serve God and his truth, and to spread it abroad, and it brings their minds out of the earth, which makes them brittle, and changeable, and uncertain; for it doth not change, neither doth it touch with that which does change. As to unity, it makes all like itself, that do obey it. Universal, to live out of narrowness and self, and deny it. So it brings all into oneness, and answereth the good principle of God in all people, and brings into humility, and the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of his wisdom [Psa 111:10]; and it brings all to have a care of God's glory and his honour; and watches over all the professors of it for their good, to keep within its bounds, and walk within its order; which he that is out of truth, leads into all disorder, in whom there is no truth [John 8:44]; and the truth makes all its children free from him, and in it to reign over him. Thanks, glory, and honour to the Lord God of truth over all for ever. Amen.

The Lord, who is the God of all peace and order [1 Cor 14:33], alone protects and preserves his people with his eternal power; for the devil's power is not eternal, it had a beginning, and must have an ending; for the eternal power limits that devourer and destroyer. And therefore, friends, patience must be exercised in the truth; and keep to the word of patience [Rev 3:10], which word was before the world was [John 1:1], and abides and endures for ever [1 Pet 1:23]; and it will keep Friends over and out of all the snares of the world, and its temptations.

So with my love in the seed of life, that reigns over all, and in it the Lord God Almighty preserve and keep you all to his glory. Amen.

G. F.

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