

Queries¹

Are our Meetings for worship and business held in expectant waiting for divine guidance?

Do our Meetings, for whatever purpose, give evidence that Friends come to them with hearts and minds open to the experience of God?

How do we prepare, both as a meeting and as individuals, to become a gathered Meeting?

In what ways are our Meetings a source of strength and guidance for daily Christ-like living?

Advices

The basis of the Quaker Meeting is silent and direct communication with God.

The heart of the life of the Religious Society of Friends is the Meeting for worship. We recognize the value of silence, not as an end, but as a means toward the end of attaining communication with God and fellowship with one another. In speech or in silence, each person contributes to the Meeting. By worshiping God together we strengthen one another.²

Other readings

As was observed by Robert Barclay in 1671: *And as many candles lighted and put in one place do greatly augment the light and make it more to shine forth, so when many are gathered together into the same life, there more of the glory of God and his powers appears, to the refreshment of each individual.*³

Worship is our response to an awareness of God. We can worship alone, but when we join with others in expectant waiting we may discover a deeper sense of God's presence. We seek a gathered stillness in our meetings for worship so that all may feel the power of God's love drawing us together and leading us.⁴

Friends have never regarded worship as an individual activity. People who regard Friends' meetings as opportunities for meditation have failed to appreciate this corporate aspect. Waiting and listening are activities in which everybody is engaged. Spoken ministry helps to articulate the common guidance which the Holy Spirit is believed to give the group as a whole. Therefore the waiting and listening is corporate also.⁵