

AN APPENDIX

A CATECHISM FOR CHILDREN

GEORGE FOX, 1660

By Charlotte Condia

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## GOD IS ONE

Based on his experience as a mystic, Fox believes:

God lives within us.

It is possible to know and communicate with this God within.

God is One.

God lives within us and we can have an intimate relationship with Him. No intermediary is necessary to know and see Him. Fox addresses God with many names – Light, Lord of hosts, Pure, Living God Eternal, Exalted, Lord God Almighty, Creator, Power, Wisdom – but He is One. (These names are not a list of the attributes of God; these are God.)

The Life is One; the eternal Spirit is One. One spirit who baptizes all into one body where there is pureness and oneness. 46 All being guided by it, all are subject One and are one in unity of Spirit.

The Light is but One who leads us out of darkness into the everlasting Day, one fire who consumes all evil. In Letter 4 Fox writes, “Mind the Light, that all may be refreshed one in another and all in One.”

The Word is One, One Head who calls all to repentance. Christ the Son of God is One means that the Son and the Father are One; the Son and the Light are One. Christ the Son of God is but one in every male and female would seem to mean that God is whole and complete, a unity within every person. (This is also one of the Biblical underpinnings for Fox’s belief in egalitarianism.)

Fox admonishes us to dwell in the Power of the Lord, in the Seed of God, for this will keep us clear in our understanding. God, the Seed, who is but One in all, will reign in us and we will reign over the world.

Friends should keep in oneness and unity, children of one Father and of the household of God. All are one in this faith.

Fox uses the names of the Persons of the Trinity – God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Crucified God, Sun of Righteousness, Holy Ghost, Father – but he is not a Trinitarian. Although the term “trinity” doesn’t appear in the pastoral letters, Fox would have been familiar with the idea as it had been around since the beginning of the third century AD. Origen in the East and Tertullian in the West first used the word at about the same time. The Scriptures speak of Father, Son and Holy Ghost but do not use the words Trinity or three persons. These words are in the seventeenth century English Book of Common Prayer. As it is not in the Bible, this may be the reason that Fox does not use the term. On the other hand, he may not use it because it was not part of his experience.

## GOD IS ONE

The Word is One.

The Light is One.

The Eternal Spirit is One.

The Son of God is One

Christ is the Son of God, One in all male and female.

The Life is One

There is

One Light who leads everyone out of darkness into the everlasting Day.

One Christ who calls all to repentance.

One Head who calls the repentant up to Himself.

One Power that raises up the Seed.

The Seed Christ is One, so all who are in the Spirit are One

One Eye which is the Light.

One fire which consumes all that the Light discovers to be evil.

One spirit which baptizes all into one body where there is pureness and oneness.

One Light who leads you out of darkness into the everlasting Day 46

Friends should keep in oneness and unity. All are one in this faith for all who are in the Spirit of Christ are One

THE LIGHT

## AN ABC FOR GROWNUPS ABOUT THE LIGHT

ABIDE in the Light of Christ. ALL must be turned to the Light.

BELIEVE in the Light. Be BOLD in the Light for He BRINGS us to Christ.

The Light is COMFORT, wisdom, love and mercy.

DWELL, wait, walk in the Light for He leads to the DAY dawning and the DAY Star arising in our hearts.

The Light is EVERYWHERE and in EVERYONE. So all people have EQUALITY.

The Light, FOUNTAIN of Life. FORGIVE each other in the Light.

The Light is GOD; He is GLORIOUS.

The Light is a Heavenly Light, a Heavenly Treasure within; He HAMMERS down, judges evil.

The Light is INTIMATE and personal; the Light is our INWARD teacher.

Dwelling in the Light, which is unchangeable, we come to JUDGE all the changeable ways and worships. The JUST walk in a path which is a shining light.

The Light will KEEP our minds turned toward God.

In the Light we receive the Love of God; Those that LOVE the Light receive LIFE.

The Light is a MYSTERY.

We do NOT own the Light.

The Light is ONE; He is the same always. So we must OBEY the Light.

The Light is PURE.

The Light changes QUARRELS to peace.

The Light shows us what is RIGHT.

The Light, the SUM and SUBSTANCE.

The Light is TRUTH and UNITY.

All people are VALUABLE because the Light lives WITHIN us.

We are eXhorted to Live in the Light. We must eXperience the Light for ourselves.

The Light is in the YEARLY Meeting.

The Light is in the ZENITH and the nadir.

## WHO IS THIS LIGHT IN WHOM WE MUST BELIEVE?

Everyone must believe in the Light. This belief brings peace and gives victory. None comes to be children of the Light but such as believe in the Light. Fox describes the Light as a heavenly Light, a divine Light, a saving Light, a Heavenly Treasure within and the Light of the Glory of God. In the Light we receive the love of God. We should be content in the Light for the He is comfort, wisdom, love and mercy. The Light is pure, sufficient. The Light is spiritual but He gives material support as well. He will clothe us if we love and obey Him.

There are not individual Lights; the Light is one. The Light is consistent, doesn't differ in different persons, male or female, young or old. Always the same, He doesn't differ throughout time. The Light understands the world. The Light is given to all, even to unbelievers, we don't own Him.

## DWELL IN THE LIGHT WITHIN

The Light is within us. He is with us everywhere no matter where we are or whom we are with. We should love the Light within. When writing of our relationship with the Light, Fox uses phrases like turn to the Light, wait in the Light, walk in the Light, stand still in the Light, dwell in the Light. We walk in the Light and have fellowship with the Son and the Father and fellowship with one another. We stand still in the Light, who comes from the Word. We wait in the Light who turns us to holiness For if we dwell in the Light, we will receive eternal Life. All we have to do is love the Light and wait. God does the rest.

Fox believes that the Light is in the Meeting for worship. The mystical nature of the Meeting, the sacred nature of the Meeting, the importance of the Meeting are all due to the presence of the Light, Christ.

## THE LIGHT CALLS US TO REPENTANCE

The Light calls us to repentance. He shows us what is right and what is wrong, distinguishes the precious from the vile. He will show us our lives, how we have acted, whom we have hurt. If there is strife among Friends the Light will judge and condemn it. So we should heed the Light for He will show us what is contrary. .

The Light sets a watch over all our thoughts, words, and actions. He also helps us so that we can change, and will give us the strength, the courage to give up whatever we are doing wrong. Secretly, the Light will lead us out of darkness. (For Fox light and the day are good while darkness and night are evil.) If we speak, think, or act in any way that is against God, the Light will reprove us. But especially, He will lead us from loving and worshiping ourselves and caring only for bodily comforts, to the worship of God.

The unjust person, who can neither see nor abide the Light, calls Him natural, created, made or conscience. But the Light is not our conscience; He is in our conscience. (Fox is not entirely consistent in this but he does write, "Mind the light of God in your consciences which will

show you all deceit.")

Belief in the Light within means that all people are valuable, so there should be equality for all.

The Light is not some indulgent grandfather. The Light condemns, shows sin, evil and lust; the Light keeps us chaste. But it is possible to lose the Light. The Light is the Kingdom of heaven and enables us to see this Kingdom. If we go from the Light, we go from the Kingdom, Power, Life, Glory. In the Light we see our unrighteousness, for the Light is the eye. But if the eye comes to be closed, then the testimony of Christ is not received and the Light is gone. The Light of the wicked is put out.

The anti-christ is blind to the Light, denies the Light, is against the Light, goes from the Light which enlightens him, does not confess Christ the Light.

It is possible to lose the Light. For the Light condemns and the Light of the wicked is put out. But He also saves us from this sin; He breaks our bonds of iniquity. ("Breaking our bonds" is a phrase that Fox uses often based on his experience of courts and prison.) Those that are out of the Light are unable to pray; those that vex the Spirit and quench it cannot pray to God.

Drunks are out of the Light, out of the fear of God. "They devour the Creation upon their lusts."

## WARS AND QUARRELS

The Light leads us out of the occasion of wars and out of wars themselves. He casts out quarrelsome spirits and leads into true peace. The Light is also Power. This power will shake the earth and remove it out of its place.

## THE LIGHT INSPIRED THE BIBLE

George Fox knows the Bible, or, as he calls it, the Scriptures, very well and he was deeply influenced by it. His writings are filled with direct quotes and allusions to it. The Light inspired the scriptures and now helps us understand them. It distinguishes the true prophet's word from the false, the words of holy men from the words of unholy ones. But the Bible is only a declaration of the fountain, not the fountain itself. Fox will give a long and elaborate biblical argument for a certain premise. Then he will say something to the effect that Christ is sufficient.

## UNITY PURITY AND TRUTH

Unity, purity and truth are words that George Fox uses often to describe the Light. If we come to conclusions based on human reasoning, and if we try to dominate others, this is wrong. We should express only what the Light reveals to us. Then we will say what is right and there will be no dissension, just true unity.

The Light is God, Creator, glorified; He is Christ, Truth, purity. Universal; everywhere, within all persons, throughout time and before time. He fills all space, has no beginning and will have

no end. But He is also intimate, personal, direct, positive, and above all immediate. The Light can be addressed and responded to; it is possible to experience the Light first hand, without an intermediary.

A person of great faith, Fox has a deep commitment and holds himself accountable for his actions. In his letters which span many years, we see the fruits of his long experience in the faith. It is a rare person who can express their faith as well as he does. The Light is Christ, the Light is God, the Light is everywhere, everyone possesses Him and the Light is in our conscience showing us what to do. There is no question but that Fox experiences the Light. The great pleasure of reading his letters is to share the wonderful, immediate, personal, loving Light whom he knows. He has a confidence, a sureness about God so that reading his pastoral letters gives the reader confidence, too.

But Fox has certain givens that do not necessarily characterize Friends today. He takes it for granted that we will be devout, believing, orthodox Christians and that this is the better part of our religious experience. He also assumes that we know the Bible intimately and accept that it – through our experience and the Holy Spirit – has a special kind of authority.

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A blessing: Dear hearts, hearken to the Light to be guided by Him. For if you love the Light, you love Christ. In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ consider it. The Lord open your understandings to know Him! Letter 17, 1652

## INTERVIEWS WITH FRIENDS ABOUT THE LIGHT

The central belief of the Religious Society based on Romans 10:20: Christ Jesus saith, I am the way who doth enlighten every man that cometh into the world, and no man cometh to the Father but by me, ever man having a light from Christ the way, it leads to the Father. Christ's true and best name is Christ the Light who hath enlightened every man who cometh into the world. Fox's Catechism for Children

In his pastoral letters Fox writes that all must believe in the Light. This belief brings peace and gives victory. Using these pastoral letters, I tried to understand what he believed about the Light. Then I interviewed forty Friends - young and old, men and women, birthright and convinced, from programmed and unprogrammed meetings - to see if they had the same beliefs about the Light as George Fox. In many ways they did.

The Light is within me. It is with me everywhere no matter where I am or who I am with. I should love the Light within. Today Friends commonly believe that the Light lives within us. A woman who is a social worker sees the Light in the severely retarded children at the state center who she helps to care for. She believes that they have just as much ability to come in contact with the Light as the most assiduous Meeting goer. Although these retarded persons don't even have any words, they are in the Light and It is in them.

Many Friends believe that we are saved by the God within who brings about changes in us and in the world. This inner search is an indispensable part of being a Quaker. Robert Barclay calls it the inner work, communion with that of God within.

When writing of our relationship with the Light, George Fox uses phrases like turn to the Light, wait in the light, walk in the Light, stand in the Light, dwell in the Light. Many Friends use this kind of language. I hear it often: keep in the Light, travel in the Light. Parents speak of keeping their children in the Light, teachers their students. Editors of Meeting newsletters use it. Frequently it expresses the wish for the person to be protected by the Light. "Keep safe" said to a teenager going off in a car is an equivalent expression used by the world's people.

Friends speak of the Light often as forgiveness and mercy, rarely as justice and righteousness.

Most of the Friends I interviewed seem to feel that there is a proper Quaker way of behaving in the world because of their belief in the Light. For them this belief carries certain obligations and responsibilities to live a life based on peace, community, simplicity and equality.

One older Friend felt that the need to respond to the Light and do good in the world was compulsive. Another felt that the Light is individual responsibility. She felt that you showed this responsibility by feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless.

A Friend, who described herself as an anarchist, saw things differently. "I am put off by the political emphasis of some Quakers and try to avoid all that side to the greatest extent I can," she said. She attended her Yearly Meeting and "found that most of what went on was political

organizing. I didn't like that. It was people being hyperactive I never went back." For her this was not a religious experience. "I was attracted to Quakerism because it was a real experience of the mystical presence not by the fact that it is a socially aware group."

For everyone interviewed the belief in the Light within means that all people are valuable, so there should be equality for all. Most people agreed that there is equality for women in the Society of Friends. Just about everyone said that as we have women clerks it follows that we have equality. Two women who worked for the Society did not agree and felt that they were treated as second class citizens. One, the wife of a husband and wife team, felt that she was treated very differently from her husband.

One respondent told me of a group discussion that he had attended on the question, "Are Quakers Sexist?" A participant in the group, a man, insisted that Quakers were not sexist at all. He was quite surprised by the annoyed reaction of the woman members of the group who thought that some aspects of Quakerism were sexist. The respondent felt that this man's combination of naivete and bravery was due to his being unmarried.

One hears the cynical remark that the only way we get blacks to Meeting is by adopting them.

The point at which some Friends I interviewed differ markedly from Fox is that they felt that the Light was concerned with charity, doing good in the world, not holiness within themselves. They also want to believe that the Light is forgiveness, not judgment. (People are not consistent. In one breath they will say that the Light doesn't make judgments; in the next that the Light shows us what is to be done.)

No one used such words as the Light condemns, shows sin, evil and lust as Fox does. No one but Fox said that the Light keeps me chaste. Friends shy away from this austere, demanding word. They seemed to be saying that one ought to do good in the world and have social concerns, but don't question my sexual morals.

No one said anything about heeding the Light as Fox does. People do talk of being given direction for their lives - get a new job, write a book. They do not use "heed the Light" in the sense of quite specific moral directives - don't lie, don't deceive.

All the Friends interviewed believed in the peace witness of the Society but no one mentioned the Light in connection with it.

Many Friends are Bible readers. Even so the lives, words and thinking of most Friends today are not influenced by the Bible to the extent that Fox's were. No one interviewed mentioned the Bible as an important Quaker document, or as essential for Quaker authority.

Friends see the Light as integrity, wholeness, oneness and truth. Truth is a favorite word with Fox. Truth flourishes, even lives in jails.

Various interpretations of the Light are acceptable to Friends today. It is possible to find the

Light in some way other than through Christ. To many Friends the Light means love and forgiveness.

For Fox the Light is intimate, personal, direct, positive, and above all immediate. This is true for many Friends today. For other Friends, the Light is abstract, detached, the life force of the universe, a force of creation in us. These Friends believe that the Light guides us and helps us to understand ourselves.

George Fox uses a number of names for the Light: Seed, Christ, Inward Teacher. Most often I heard Light or the God within. God within is the most common. Several times I've heard Christ or Inner Christ. Every once in awhile someone uses the name Seed or the Teacher Within.

As a child, an older Friend sometimes found the belief in this Teacher Within was uncomfortable. "My Father believed so firmly in the Teacher Within that if I asked for advice he would say, 'Now you know that within you is the answer.' I would get so angry. I wanted to be able to tell my friends that my parents wouldn't allow me to do a certain thing. It was hard to always have to make up my mind about things."

Like Fox, everyone believed that the Light could be addressed and responded to. It was possible to experience God first hand without an intermediary. Another common belief is that we see the Light and answer it in everyone.

A person of great faith, Fox has great personal commitment, holds himself accountable for his actions. In his letters which span many years, we see the fruits of his long experience in the faith. It is a rare person who can express their faith as well as he does. In many ways, though, the experience of the Light is much the same for Fox and for Friends today. The Light is Christ, the Light is God, the Light is everywhere, everyone possesses it and the Light is in our conscience showing us what to do.

There is no question that Fox experiences the Light. The great pleasure of reading his letters is to share the wonderful, immediate, personal, loving Light whom he knew. Everyone I interviewed expressed a belief in the Light. It was the one belief common to all. Their experience of the Light differed one from another and in many ways from Fox. However they all experienced it in some way. Some persons have a vivid and direct personal awareness of the Light, while for others the experience is more quiet. For some, their belief and experience, seems to be more abstract, less personal.

Friends living today must not assume that if their experience of the Light agrees with Fox it is a true experience and if it doesn't it is false. We experience the Light in our own time and in our own way.

## FOX'S CHRISTOLOGY

The Old Testament, the New Testament and his experience are Fox's authority for understanding Christ. He begins with the primitive church and the apostles for they are the last people – until himself – who really understood Christ. He pretty well ignores the sixteen hundred years that intervened. In this way he doesn't have to deal with the history of Christianity, the crusades, the inquisition, and Christian participation in wars.

Always orthodox himself, Fox felt compelled to defend the orthodoxy of Friends in the letter written to the Governor of Barbados. Because of the "many scandalous lies and slanders that have been cast upon Friends, saying that we deny Christ Jesus which all of our books and declarations clearly testify to the contrary." When Friends talk about this letter today, they say that it is the "closest thing that Quakers have to a creed" or that it is "sort of a creed." But the letter is the Nicene and Apostle's creed in Fox's own language. The language is scriptural but the creeds influenced what he says in this letter:

We own and believe in

Jesus the beloved and begotten Son of God, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, and who is the express image of the invisible God by whom all things were created.

He, who knew no sin, was crucified for us in the flesh, buried, rose again the third day by the power of His Father.

He ascended up into heaven and now sitteth on the right hand of God.

He is our wisdom and righteousness, our prophet.

He is the Quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.

He brings the oaths of God, the new covenant of light, life, grace and peace.

He alone is our Redeemer and Savior.

Fox believes that Christ is God's Son, the way to God, the Second Adam, who never fell, and is eternal life. He is the Light who has enlightened every man and woman who has come into the world. He is the Life, the Word, who brings the glad tidings of salvation; the Life that was with the Father before the world began. He is all virtue.

Christ bore the sins and iniquities of all mankind, and was an offering for the sins of the whole world so that we may have Life through Him. He did not die as he was God, but as he was man. Fox's phrase, "as he was man," is entirely orthodox. The human nature of Christ, not the divine nature, was crucified and rose. For Christ, the man, said as he hung on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There is no suggestion that Christ is God at some times, but not at others.

Fox doesn't retell the Christmas story in the pastoral letters. (In letter 216, 1662, he does mention the manger. Although the crooked and perverse generation professed Christ, "He has not had so much place of entertainment as in their manger.") First, because Friends did not keep Christmas, didn't follow the liturgical calendar of the Anglican church. He does use the star as a symbol for Christ: the bright morning star and the Day star rising in our hearts. He seldom

mentions Christ's mother; he doesn't write about Christ's childhood; he writes about the human Christ rarely.

He writes beautifully, poetically, passionately about the Divine Christ who is the Heavenly and spiritual man by whom the world was made. He is the heavenly Overseer, heavenly Priest who breaks the peace of all the earthly priests. The Heavenly Light, Counselor, Teacher, Instructor. He oversees us with His heavenly eye.

## SPIRIT AND POWER MEET

Dear Friends and brethren in Christ Jesus, all walk in the Power and Spirit of God, that is over all, in Love and Unity. For Love overcomes and Love and Charity never fails, but casts out false fear, is of God and unites all the hearts of his people together in heavenly Joy, concord and Unity. Amen Letter 417 written in London, the 27<sup>th</sup> of the 5<sup>th</sup> Month, 1689.

Power and Spirit meet together in Jesus Christ, the Lord's Light. The King James Bible translates Micah 3:8: But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin. It may also be translated: However, I am filled with power with (the aid of) the Spirit of the Lord, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin. Micah is contrasting himself as a prophet with false prophets who (v. 5)"bite with their teeth and cry peace"—that is, who for a fee give optimistic messages to a transgressing nation of Israel. He says that to such prophets it will be (v. 6) "night without vision, and darkness without revelation."

Micah means that the Spirit (breath) of the Lord is breathed/blown into him, filling him with an energy wherewith he gives—indeed, is compelled to give—the message which truly represents God's will, and is condemnatory of wrongdoing. It can be suggested that George Fox has this passage in mind when he says that "the Spirit and the power meet."

## LET ALL BOW AT THE NAME OF JESUS THE LORD

We are to gather in the Name of Jesus, a Name which is above all other names on earth. We are to keep our Meetings in the Name of Jesus, be valiant for the Name of Jesus. Power is Christ's name: Power and Light, Life and Truth. Christ has all Power in heaven and earth given to Him, that all may feel his living and divine Presence among them. The Cross of Christ is the Power of God. Friends should bow to the real Cross, not a stick, stone or piece of wood. Christ is the answer; He is sufficient. Through His power and strength, Friends are able to do all things.

Fox names both God and Christ Lord: Praise, honor, and glory be to the Lord who fills heaven and earth! Lord of peace, Lord of joy! Lord of glory, Lord of mercy, Lord of strength, Lord of Life with power over death, and Lord of Lords, and King of kings! There are many lords in the world but one Lord Jesus Christ who is worthy! Oh! That every one would strive to put down, in themselves, mastery and honor, that the Lord of heaven and earth might be exalted!

This Lord God knows our hearts, shows us our thoughts and turns us to holiness. This Lord of Lords, Lord of Life is the rod who strikes down our persecutors in secret. He provides illumination for the Holy city; he brings salvation.

To call God and Christ *our* Lord makes it very personal.

This Lord of Lords, this powerful, all sufficient God is also the true shepherd. He is a heavenly Shepherd, a true Shepherd, the chief Shepherd of our souls, who protects the lambs – us – from dogs. He feeds us in green pastures and gives life abundantly.

In one paragraph in letter 399 written on the 4<sup>th</sup> of the 4<sup>th</sup> month in 1685 and entitled: Pure and undefiled Religion, Fox writes a summary of Christianity, the one, pure, undefiled Religion.

From one God, the Creator of all, Father of all  
One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made and created.  
Christ is the Man. Christ is the Mediator between God and man.  
One body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free.  
One Spirit even as we are called to one hope.  
One Faith, which Christ Jesus is the author and finisher of.  
One baptism by which we are baptized into one body and by one Spirit.

Fox has a passionate love of Christ and one of the ways that he shows this is by the many beautiful and inspiring names that he calls Him. Here are some of these names from the Catechism.

Author of thy faith 84  
Covenant of Light  
Everlasting Covenant 25  
Head of the Church  
Hope of Glory Col. I.27. I Pet.  
Jesus  
Life  
Light  
Power 73, 84  
Prince of Joy  
Prince of Life 74/75  
Prince of Peace  
Prince of Power  
Quickener  
Savior  
Second Adam 10, 20  
Teacher, who is the way to the Father  
The Way Rom. 10. 20 quoted on pages 8, 9  
Wisdom of God 23  
Word of Life 78  
Word of God. 32

POWER IN THE PASTORAL LETTERS OF GEORGE FOX

George Fox knew the Bible – principally the King James but also the Geneva – or as he calls it, the scripture, backwards and forwards and inside out. His knowledge and experience of it are immense. He quotes from it and alludes to it often in his pastoral letters, letters which were to be read publicly, and which date from 1650 to 1690.

The Bible gave him much of his language and his experience showed him what to do with this language. His perception of the Power of God came from both sources. He takes this information and gives it new content and energy. He uses the word power both as a name for God and as a divine attribute. Christ has all power; Friends also have power. God confers inner strength and purity on His saints, His elect. Power protects them from those in the world who would harm them; Power defends them from the power of darkness.

Fox believes that it is possible to know God directly, intimately, without an intermediary for He lives within every person This getting to know Him must be done in fear, reverence and awe but Fox makes it sound easy. He turns his mind inward and waits until an entrance is made into his soul. It is not only possible to get to know God, it is everyone's job in life.

#### POWER AS A NAME OF GOD

Fox uses Power as a name for God. In Letter 206, 1661 he writes:

Know and feel the Power and the Seed.  
Partake of the Power.  
Shod in the Power.

In Letter 104, 1655:

Hasty spirits which will run without the Power.  
There is safety in the Power.  
In your meetings know and feel the Power. Letter 104, 1655

Fox uses Almighty, which means powerful, as a name for God.

God Almighty increase and multiply us..  
Keep our minds in the strength of the Almighty.  
May The Lord God Almighty preserve us.  
The Almighty supports us.  
The God Almighty guides and prospers us.  
The Lord God Almighty has discovered you.

The Lord God Almighty is with everyone and keeps them turned to worship the Creator and serve him, not the creature. So that they may love and worship God the Creator who will protect them by his Power.

Almighty is also an attribute of God; God is all-sufficient and Almighty.

In Letter 217, 1662 Fox writes: All you that are turned unto the Mighty God of heaven and earth and Live in the Power of the mighty God of heaven and earth, that goes over the unrighteous world. In which Power of God you may enlarge your borders and spread the Truth abroad ... having the Power of God that goes over... all.

He also uses mighty as an attribute of God. Friends should know the Power of the “mighty God. His arm, how it works; the hand how it carries them.” This mighty Power of God enables Friends to stand over all the world. It also enables them to trample, tread and bend the beast’s and dragon’s worship and false prophets before the mighty God.

Omnipotent, which means all powerful, is a word that can only apply to God. But this all powerful God hears the cries of the oppressed and afflicted ones, day and night.

The most powerful human that Fox knew was the King of England. Although he preached to or at him, sent him petitions, told him what he was doing wrong, he was well aware of his great earthly power. He wished him no ill. In Letter 242, 1665, he wrote: As it is said, “God save the King,” or “God bless the King,” we would not have him nor any man destroyed, but saved and so blessed. The saved man will not suffer anything to rule that destroys. So our mind is, and we would that all men were saved.

However God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the strong, all-sufficient, omnipotent God has all power but still sees all the actions of men. Friends should be loyal to this King who conquered the devil, death and hell.

Fox also uses both Power and powerful as an attribute of the Father. Christ, who knew no sin, was crucified for us in the flesh, buried, rose again the third day by the power of His Father. This powerful Father and eternal God is due all glory, honor and thanks forever.

In his personal conduct Fox never resisted personal attacks or threats of violent death. He might rebuke or stare down his persecutor or overcome his assailants by an appeal which shamed them or made them loving. He might try to evade his pursuers or rely on the non-violent help of Friends. He was often bloodied, sore and bruised, but by the power of the Lord he was refreshed.

Friends were to keep their minds in the strength of the Almighty, not in weakness, nor in infirmities but in the Lord’s Power for It will bring all their persecutors to rags and poverty. They should know the Power of the Lord God. and heed nothing but His Life and power.

## SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD'S POWER

POWER PRESERVES

GOD'S POWER IS A BLESSING, ALSO A BENEDICTION.

POWER IS BLESSED TRUTH.

POWER DISCOVERED AND AWAKENED US

The Lord God Almighty has discovered us – revealed Himself to us – by His prophets and servants. All Friends and people mind that which first convinced you, that Power of God which first awakened you.

POWER IS UNIVERSAL, EVERLASTING, SUPREME

POWER IS OVER ALL

Fox wrote in 1643 how God sent him forth: "I felt the power of the Lord spread over all the world in praise."

POWER IS ORDER.

POWER IS LIFE, LOVE AND DOMINION.

WORKING IN GOD'S GARDEN GIVES POWER.

POWER IS LOVE.

POWER ABOLISHES DEATH

POWER TAKES AWAY THE OCCASION OF ALL WAR.

THE GOD OF POWER WON'T TOLERATE SIN

THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD.

THE POWER OF GOD IS IN THE MEETING

## THE LIGHT HAS POWER

Fox names both God and Christ the Light. God is One, the Light is One, the Cross and the Gospel are but one. God is one experience with a great deal of variety for Fox. Friends may know the Light and taste His Power for the Light and the Power of God make an end to all unholiness.

## CHRIST HAS ALL POWER

As always for Fox, Christ is the answer. Through His power and strength, Friends will be able to do all things. Power is Christ's name: the Name of Christ who is Power and Light in you all.

Christ has all Power in heaven and earth given to him that all may feel his living and divine Presence among the King of Kings and Lord of lords, He has ascended above all principalities, powers and thrones. This powerful, all sufficient God is also the true shepherd who protects the lambs from dogs. He feeds them in green pastures. This shepherd gives life abundantly

Christ is the Power of God: And there is the safe sitting in Christ, the new and living Way, the Word of God, the Power of God. (Letter 222, section 8, 1662)

The Cross of Christ is the Power of God. Friends should bow to it – the real Cross, not a stick, stone or piece of wood.

Power and Spirit meet together in Jesus Christ, the Lord's Light. He is the sovereign Lord of the Universe; He has power over all men so they owe Him allegiance. The conviction that Christ rules in power as universal king is central to Fox's faith.

Fox uses the name Seed for Christ. The name is Biblical: Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to the seed, which is Christ. Galatians 3:16. But he takes the biblical terminology and develops it in new directions. For the Seed is Power but He also lives in Power. This Seed Power, which keeps Friends over the world in cleanness and newness of life is begotten by Him. Christ the Seed also breaks the serpents power and crushes him to pieces.

Fox advises Friends to dwell in patience and love of God and one another. The Lamb must have the victory over them all, the wild beasts in the field who are in the fall from God. And though the beast's horns be ever so long, yet the Lamb shall conquer them and take away the sin. He has the Wisdom and Power, so follow him.

Fox seems to give the Lamb Christ an extra bit of Power. For the Lamb makes war in righteousness and will rule, subdue, conquer and be victorious over human sin and the power of the devil. The Lamb was the special defender of Friends under persecution. So all thanks be to Him, who is come to rule alone in his saints. The righteous should rejoice for the Lamb is victorious over the beast.

Friends have both the Power of God and the Power of the Lamb Christ to defend and help them. .

The Second Adam, is Power, who must rule in people's hearts in obedience. As He does in all that have Power and enjoy Life. ( Fox is always surprising you. Who would have expected enjoy Life in this context.)

Fox uses marriage in a symbolic way and writes that Friends should be married and joined to the royal Seed, Christ and the Lamb. We should keep marriage with Him our first love, the holy one, the Just one, the Light, the Truth and Power of God, who makes an end to all unholiness.

Keep your Faith in the Power of God, which will bring you to the Marriage of the Lamb, by which Power you may have oil in your lamps, that your lamps may burn always.

### FRIENDS HAVE POWER

All Friends live in the authority of the Power, grow up in the Power. They have the ability to contact and know Power. They can answer the witness of God in everyone through the Power. A life free from sin is possible if they live humbly in God's power.

They are not to quench, nor abuse the Power but be faithful and obedient to Him. They should pay attention to the Power, stir up others into righteousness in the Power of God. Rejoice, delight at the sound of the Power.

Fox believed that Friends have authority from God to know His Power. He emphasizes over and over again that it is possible to contact – know and feel – this incredible Power. This is possible because everyone knows his or her portion and measure of this living Spirit and Power. All Friends have two important jobs: to know God and to answer that of God in every person. Getting to know God is Friend's most important job. But it is also important for them to answer the witness of God in everyone through the authority of the Power of God.

God's Power protects the saints – Fox and Friends – physically. In Letter 304, 1673 quoted above when he had been a prisoner for eight months the Lord's Seed and Power protected him. The Power of God protects the saints spiritually. For It expels all that which has darkened the understanding. and which burdens the soul.

A life free from sin is possible because God does not command anything that He does not give the power to accomplish. So there is no reason for Friends to be hasty spirits who run without the Power. For Power keeps down that which would be hasty.

All Friends have to do is stand fast, stand still in that Power which brings peace; stand still in trouble and see the strength of the Lord. Wait in the Light to receive the Power to become Children of God. They should walk in the Power and Spirit of God that is over all, allow It to have supremacy in their lives. Friends should work together, labor together in the Power of God, in His Image, in his Garden as man and woman did before the Fall.<sup>70</sup>

## THE POWER OF DARKNESS

Fox believed that he had authority by the Power of God to judge, if he judged with the Spirit of Truth and by the Light. He also had the authority to understand the powers of darkness and to trample upon all this power and its authority. The work that God had planned for Fox was to turn people "from the Power of Satan unto God." Friends should not fear the power of darkness for they have the bright morning Star in their hearts to expel it. All men and women's strength is in the power of God which goes over the power of darkness.

Friends are to follow the Lamb Christ who reigns over all principalities and powers. The Lamb makes war in righteousness, and He will subdue all things to himself. Friends need not fear the devil with his beast's horns and heels for the Lamb will be victorious. The Lamb takes away human sin, breaks the devil's power over it. He will conquer the devil

## Endnotes

The numbers in the endnotes refer to George Fox's pastoral letters. I read them in Canby Jones' edition of them: *The Power of the Lord is Over All*.

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There is a reference to the Light on almost every page of Fox's Catechism for Children.

#### SOME REFERENCES TO POWER IN THE PASTORAL LETTERS

##### POWER AS A NAME OF GOD.

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[I found the letters difficult to read and understand. So I have introduced this book with a chapter on how to read the letters. Then I have described and commented on the 410 letters extant. These two books and other books and resources, such as a *Select Concordance*, on the pastoral letters may be found at [www.charlottecondia.com](http://www.charlottecondia.com)]

Jones, Canby

*The Power of the Lord is Over All*, Friends United Press, Richmond Indiana, 1989

[Dr. Jones has done a great service to Friends by making Fox's pastoral letters so readable.]

*George Fox's Attitude Toward War*. Academic Fellowship, Annapolis, Maryland, 1972

[*George Fox's Attitude Toward War*, originally published by Academic Fellowship, Annapolis, Maryland, 1972, is out of print. As it is an eloquent statement of the pacifist position, I thought that Friends would like to read it. So I asked Dr. Jones if I could add it to the Las Cruces Peace Organization's web site. He was agreeable to this. My daughter and younger son helped me so now you can read:

A short biography of George Fox

The original text of the book

The original text with underlining removed and some of Fox's seventeenth century spelling modernized.

A summary of the book

You can find this at Las Cruces Peace Resource Organization web site: <http://geocities.com/lcpronm/> Go to the home page and click on peace books.]