

DOCTRINES OF QUAKERS

*A Brief Summary of the Doctrines of the Religious Society of Friends
(Evangelical Quakers) - Part One*

1. GOD THE FATHER, CHRIST, THE ATONEMENT, AND THE RESURRECTION: "We hold that true Friends today believe in the one and only wise, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and eternal God, the Heavenly Father. And we own and believe in Jesus Christ, his beloved and only begotten Son, in whom he is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, by whom were all things created. We desire also to affirm our belief in the virtue of his atoning sacrifice on Calvary, for the sins of all mankind, and in his bodily resurrection from the Grave."

2. THE INWARD WORK OF CHRIST: is strongly emphasized: we must "submit to the manifestations of his will, made known in our hearts." Yet the inward and outward work of Christ are inseparable."(Quoting John Crook) 'This new birth of Christ, formed within and dwelling in the heart, by faith, does not limit or confine Christ to be only within, and not without also; but both within and without.' "

3. THE TRINITY: "Friends believe in the 'Unity of the three who bear record in Heaven, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,' and that these are one.

4. FUTURE LIFE AND RESURRECTION: "We believe in the realities of a spiritual and future life. We fully accept and believe in the resurrection of the dead... with the Apostle Paul, we believe in the resurrection, not of the body, but of the spirit."

5. WAITING WORSHIP: God must be worshiped "in spirit and in truth...Therefore we endeavour, when thus assembled, to attain to a condition of quiet introversion of mind, waiting upon the Lord Jesus Christ, with all our expectation directed towards him, the great head of the Church, whose right it is to direct the service of all meetings for his own

worship...In the performance of this spiritual worship, withdrawing from all outward and distracting things, as we are enabled to attain to, and maintain a solemn, waiting attitude of spirit... we are brought into a state of mind susceptible to the Gospel message, whether received immediately from the Holy Spirit, by his direct and powerful impression on our minds, or through some chosen, qualified, and anointed human instrument."

6. VOCAL PRAYER, BIBLE STUDY, AND SINGING: "In the light of Christ the Saviour's definition of Christian worship as found above... we can see a place for Vocal prayer, Bible study, and the singing of famous hymns, and of contemporary praise and worship songs and choruses before waiting worship, hence Friends use a guitar for the purpose of singing."

7. FREE GOSPEL MINISTRY: "Holding, as we do, the ministry of the Gospel to be a gift of God, freely bestowed by him, upon whomever he may call and qualify for his own work and service, regardless of sex; in the exercise of which, he is wholly dependent upon the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit... Thus we claim it to be by its very nature, entirely outside the domain of marketable commodities... The minister, if truly anointed, becomes simply the instrument, through which the Gospel message flows...the minister's duty may be to speak, or it may be to keep silent... How reverently then, should the human minister wait to know the call, and putting forth of God's power."

8. BAPTISM AND COMMUNION: "We believe that the one necessary and saving baptism is that of the Holy Spirit. We believe that in the fullness of the Gospel, communion, like worship, is in spirit and in truth; and we hold it as a most precious privilege, that we may enjoy the reality of direct personal communion with God, through the Holy Spirit. Then when the reality, the substance, is possible, why or how can we be satisfied with the shadow of outward symbols?"

9. WAR: "Perhaps that testimony of our Society, best known to the world... is the one against war and bloodshed...The whole trend of Jesus Christ's teaching is in opposition to war... Certainly we can imagine

nothing more at variance with the Gospel, than the hatred and violence of war... As we submit our hearts to the dominion of Christ, he will so fill them with love to him and to each other, that there will be no place for hatred, malice, and those other evil passions that precede and accompany the spirit of strife and war, but we will rather become peace-makers, who are to become the 'Children of God.' "

10. OATHS: "We believe Christ meant just what he said, 'Swear not at all'... it seems evident that our Saviour meant to teach the importance of that plain and simple truth, and we believe truth in its simplicity, is more potent than when accompanied by an oath."

11. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES: "We accept, and believe in the authenticity, and Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures... (Quoting Robert Barclay's Apology) 'Yet we may not call them the principal fountain of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the first adequate rule of faith and manners; because the principal fountain of truth must be the truth itself'... Neither do we call the Bible the 'Word of God,'... (which) as abundantly shown in the Scriptures themselves, is a name applied to Christ, and not to the Bible... Friends in declining to call the Bible 'The Word of God' or the primary rule of faith, (assigning that place to the Spirit, which was the inspiration of, and can alone open the Scriptures to our understanding), do not undervalue its precious teachings... What we, in this age of materialism need, is not higher criticism, but a higher, deeper, broader faith in God, and in his Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and a deeper reverence for things Divine, not omitting the Bible, which, in its entirety, is always precious to the humble, devoted Christian."

12. FREEDOM FROM SIN, GROWTH IN GRACE: "The power of God, through Christ, is inwardly revealed in the heart of man; first, as a convicter for sin, thereby condemning sin in the flesh; and secondly, bringing about a hope of emancipation from sin, through the mercy and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. He does not save us in our sins but from them. Now, as he saves us from sin, we believe

there may be experienced an entire freedom from actual sinning. Scripture shows the necessity of a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, in order that a state of perfection, or freedom from sin may be experienced."