

## **Quaker Testimonies**

Quakers have developed over time some consistent ways of behaviour, and of interacting with the world that we call Quaker Testimonies. All of our Quaker Testimonies arise out of our silent and prayerful waiting upon God through the spirit of Christ in Meeting for Worship. A basic list of our Testimonies are: Integrity, Simplicity, Peace, Equality, and Community.

### **1). Testimony of Integrity**

Integrity is the most important Testimony, because it is the one that all the other Testimonies are based upon. At its simplest, the testimony of integrity means that we believe that it is wrong to lie to individuals and organisations, and we try to tell the truth in all things and at all times. We do not take oaths, because Christ has forbidden it, as we believe it sets up a double-standard for telling the truth. On a deeper level, the testimony of integrity means that we believe it is important for the whole of our lives to be consistent with our Christian beliefs: we believe we need to walk our talk, or, as George Fox said, Let your lives preach.

The Testimony of Integrity also extends to other areas of life - ones use of time, possessions, and vocations, all may be evaluated in terms of the integrity of specifically aligning them with our perception of the will of God.

**Testimony of Integrity** - 2 Corinthians 8:21, Proverbs 12:22, Proverbs 11:3, Matthew 5:33-37, 1 Peter 3:10-12, Colossians 3:9, Exodus 20:16, Proverbs 6:16-19.

### **2). Testimony of Simplicity**

The Testimony of Simplicity is based on the idea that all of our lives need to revolve around one thing our relationship with God. Generally, it means that Quakers attempt to live lives free of clutter, superfluity, and affectation that can distract us from God. We attempt to ensure that we

choose in all things what is simple, useful, and recyclable. Quakers seek to promote reverence for God's Creation, and care of the environment. We encourage the conservation of habitats and the right sharing of the world's resources. Quakers apply the testimony of simplicity to their way of speech, to their clothing, to their work, to their possessions, and the environment, and to their choice of recreations.

**Simplicity of Lifestyle** – Matthew 6:25-34, Acts 2:44-47, Matthew 6:19-21, Luke 12:33-34, Deuteronomy 22:6, Proverbs 27:23, Genesis 9:1-3, Genesis 2:15, Isaiah 24:5-6, Romans 8:20-21.

### 3). **Testimony of Peace**

The most well-known Quaker testimony is the Peace Testimony. Quakers believe that war and violence are inconsistent with Christianity. Jesus Christ told us, love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those which despitefully use you and persecute you. (Matthew 5:44) We believe that it is difficult to love someone sincerely if we are trying to kill them. And also, But I say to you, that you do not resist evil: but whoever shall strike you on the right cheek, turn to him also the other cheek. (Matthew 5:39). Our concern for peace stems from a desire to be obedient to the commands of Jesus Christ, not originally from social or political beliefs.

People can do evil things, as individuals, groups, and nations. We believe that the proper response is to prevent them from harming others, while at the same time remembering that there is that of God in the perpetrators as well. As hard as it is to do, our call as Christians is to love both the hurtful and the hurt, to look for ways to heal both sides, and to live to help prevent conflict in the future.

**Christian Pacifism** - Psalm 34:14, 1 Peter 3:11, Hebrews 12:14, Romans 12:18, Proverbs 20:3, Leviticus 19:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:15, Romans 14:19.

#### 4). **Testimony of Equality**

The Testimony of Equality means that all people are to be given equal respect, regardless of their age, sex, race, sexuality, religion, personal opinion, medical condition, political allegiance, or social background. Quakers believe that we are all equal in the sight of God, and so we should treat each other as equals. This does not mean that we are all to be treated exactly the same. It does mean that no one is to be treated as either superior or inferior. Because of the testimony of equality, Quakers try to avoid the use of titles, which was to show equal respect for all individuals one was addressing.

**Social & Economic Justice** - Luke 10:25-37, Micah 6:8, Zechariah 7:8-10, Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:18, Isaiah 58:6-7, Proverbs 14:31, Proverbs 22:16, 1 John 3:17-18, Proverbs 29:7, Proverbs 31:8-9, Psalm 82:3-4, Jeremiah 21:11-12, Jeremiah 22:1-3, Matthew 12:11-12, Matthew 6:1-4, James 1:27, Proverbs 28:27, Leviticus 19:9-10, Proverbs 19:17, Deuteronomy 15:7-11.

#### 5). **Testimony of Community**

Quakers take seriously Jesus Christ's admonition to love each other, as well as the Apostle Paul's admonition to subject ourselves to each other. If we really are the body of Christ, and all the parts need one another as the Gospel says, then it is not right for one part to be off doing its own thing separate from the body. The Lord can and does do a lot through people as individuals. But the real power of the Gospel shows itself when we function as a united body witnessing to the world what God has done among us.

**Love For One Another** – Hebrews 10:24, Galatians 6:2, Romans 12:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:14, Philipians 2:3, Colossians 3:13-14.