



## To Be Born Again, You Must First Die to Self

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**You must loose your life to save it.**

You must become an entirely new creature, with a new heart and new mind.

This does **not** happen with reading scripture, saying a prayer, getting wet, or saying Jesus is Lord.

If you are born again, your lust and desires have been crucified to death of self.

**Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him;  
and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.** 1 John 3:9

from George Fox's Journal:

**You must have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings;** 1 Pet 4:12-13  
**if you will reign with him, you must suffer with him;** 2 Tim 2:12  
**if you will live with him, you must die with him;** 2 Tim 2:11  
**and if you die with him, you must be buried with him;** Rom 6:4  
**and being buried with him in the true baptism, you also rise with  
him.** Col 2:12

**There must be "a coming into his death, a suffering with Christ;"  
and this is of necessity to salvation;  
and not temporarily, but continually: there must be a "dying daily."**

(John Richardson, 18th Century Minister): "Except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." No, the natural and unregenerate man cannot so much as see the heavenly and spiritual kingdom of Christ, which stands not only in power, but also in righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Spirit; and to be born again is not to be done imperceptibly, no more than the natural birth can be brought forth without trouble; and to pretend to be *in Christ* and not to be new creatures, is preposterous; and to pretend to be new creatures and yet not able to render any account how it was performed, is unreasonable; for it could not be without our knowledge; for to be born again signifies to be quickened and raised into a spiritual and new life, by which the body of the sins of the flesh is mortified and we come to live a self-denying life. Those who are crucified with Christ are crucified to their sins, that as he died for sin, we ought to die to sin. In that state we live not after the flesh, although we live, as the apostle Paul said, in the flesh; but the life which these live is through faith in the Son of God. And to supposedly have all this, and much more wrought in us, and we know nothing of it, is unaccountable.

**Presumption of being born again, instead of experiential reality, is make-believe Christianity.**

**Such Christianity is of Babylon and the beast with horns like a lamb that the whole world follows.**

## The following is testimonial made by William Dewsbury, regarding the new birth:

My Friends,

**'Except you are regenerated and born again, you cannot inherit the kingdom of God.'**

**This is the word of the Lord God to all people this day;**

this lies not in lofty words, and in vain imagination, and whatever else it is that you deck yourselves with;

you must every particular man and woman be born again, else you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

This was the doctrine of Christ, in that prepared body in which he appeared in the world, and preached to Nicodemus that standing doctrine to this moment of time, and will be so while any man breathes upon the earth; there is no other way, no other gate to enter into life, but by this great work of regeneration.

Now, to enforce people to come to this great work, and to set forward from earth to heaven,

all having been driven out of paradise by the cherubim set with a flaming sword, **there is no returning to that blessed life,**

**but by the loss of that life that grieved the Spirit of God,** and what caused man to be driven out; there is no other way of return again, but by this new birth.

Just as you are all driven and forced out of paradise,

and the flaming sword and the cherubims are set to guard the way of the tree of life, so you must return into the favor of God again, by the light of Christ;

and you have line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little, to direct your minds to the light of Christ Jesus.

As the first Adam was made a living soul, so the second Adam is a quickening spirit.

**Know this for certain, no man or woman can be quickened, and raised up into the life of the second Adam, until the life of the first Adam is taken away from them.**

So now, let every one of you deal plainly with your own hearts,

how you came to be a slain people to the life of the first Adam, in which life there was a working of the mystery of iniquity in every part of man.

One cries "Lo, here is Christ;" another, "Lo, there is Christ;"

and every one is following his own imagination about the letter of the Scripture;

this is still but the vain spirit of man, running and striving to recover himself;

and this is the cause there is so much *profession* of God,

and so little of his nature appearing among the sons and daughters of men. (profession without possession)

Now, all of you that come to be regenerated,

you must come to the light of Christ; there is no other way to it.

He will search your hearts, and try your reins,

and set your sins in order before you,

and trace out the iniquities that compass you about.

Therefore **you must see yourselves a lost people, a sinful people,**

**and so come to feel the weight of your sins upon your consciences;**

**there is no other way to come to life.**

You will never complain of sin until you are burdened with it,

until you have a trumpet sounding in your ears, to awaken you,

that you may arise from the dead, that Christ may give you light.

**There is no other way, dear people.**

You must bring your deeds to the light of Christ, and abide in the sentence of condemnation;

**if you save your lives, you lose them;**

if you will lose your lives for Christ's sake, there is no danger of your eternal life.

John the Baptist, Christ's forerunner declared, 'I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that comes after me is mightier than I,

the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose,

he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire;

whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor,

and will gather his wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

What is the good of you reading Scriptures, if you don't know this fiery baptism, which all must know that are regenerated.

Do not deceive not yourselves. Christ will appear in flaming fire,

and take vengeance on all those that do not know God,

and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I stand here as a witness of the Lord of life this day.

**There is no way for people to come to salvation,  
but they must know Christ revealed in all their hearts.**

What is he doing, but rendering vengeance upon the carnal mind,  
self-pleasing, and all inordinate affections;—  
he comes with vengeance to take away your life;  
he will baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

**If you have not experienced this, you are not a true Christian,**  
you will never look death in the face with joy, nor go down to the grave with triumph.  
If you live at home in the body, and flee for your life,  
and are not willing to lose your life for Christ, if you are called to it;  
and if you will not have Christ to wash you,  
(some for shyness, and some for self-love will refuse this),  
if Christ does not wash you, you have no part in him.

**You must come to Christ, to purify you in the fiery furnace.**

The day of the Lord shall burn as an oven, as the prophet speaks;

this is a dreadful day, a day of vengeance,  
the day of the Lord Jesus Christ, who redeems his people from their sins.

Zion is redeemed with judgment, and established with righteousness.

Do not make the way to heaven easier in your minds and imaginations than indeed it is;  
and think it sufficient to live in an outward observance of the ways of God.

If your own wills are alive, and your corruptions remain un-mortified,  
the judgment of God will be your portion.

Therefore, in the Lord's name, come along with me,

I have come to declare what I have heard and seen of the Father.

Come and examine your conscience. Have you brought your deeds to the light?

Then you have received condemnation upon yourself, and your haughtiness is bowed down,  
and laid low, and you see yourself a poor miserable wretch, before the eternal God.

Whatever you know of the mind of God, have you reformed your ways?

Come along with me, and tell me what is the ground of your faith, and your confidence.

Is it your obedience and qualifications?

Because if your obedience is right, and your qualifications right, what use do you make of them?

Read the book of conscience; have you no ground for your faith?

You have put on the reformed faith, and live an unreformed life.

Search and try yourself, man or woman.

Do you watch over yourself, and keep in a sense of your separation from God,  
despite all your qualifications and partial reformation?

Do you strive to enter in at the strait gate, and the narrow way?

Here is the lost sheep you seek, the life of your will, the life of the first Adam.

The justice of God will not allow you to make a savior of your duties and qualifications;  
and to take God's jewels, and to deck yourself with them.

You cannot be saved without the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

What did your conscience say, have you been brought to this change of your mind, and of your  
conversation?

Are you all willing to part with your sins, with your pride and haughtiness?

Are you willing to part with your vile affections? This is the work of God's grace upon you.

Do you place your confidence in your duties and qualifications,

and take God's jewels and ornaments, and deck yourself with them?

You took my jewels, said the Lord, and did play the harlot;

if you return to the Lord, and **humble yourself**, and get through this difficulty, you will be happy  
forever.

This judgment of God, this flaming sword that turns every way,

will keep you from returning to sin, and bring you to Christ,

and cut you off from all hope of salvation but by him,

and make you to see the absolute need of a Savior,

and that your life is hidden with Christ in God.

It is God's infinite goodness to men, that he will take their pride from them, and humble them under his  
mighty hand.

This is the condition of poor persons that are slain by the hands of the Most High.

How can I know, when I have been slain and baptized,

and possess this death and baptism with sincerity?

They that have this baptism, enter into the heavenly life;

if you love the light of Christ Jesus, it will be the same with you.

God will make short work in the earth.

He will set your sins in order before you, and make you watchful unto prayer,

and lead you to holiness of life and conversation, and make you abhor yourself,  
and despise all the pomp and pleasures and vanities of this world.  
When he has adorned you with his graces, then watch for the light,  
and in the light of Christ you shall see light,  
and that all you have done to please God, and can do to please God, is only your duty.  
All this you ought to do; you are God's creature,  
and all this will not justify you in order to your eternal salvation, for these services you owe unto God.  
If you diligently wait, you shall see more light;  
then the sword that proceeds out of the mouth of Christ, who is called "the Word of God,"  
will cut you off from all your hopes of salvation from anything you have done,  
from any of your qualifications, from anything that you can do;  
so that you will be a hopeless soul, nothing in your own sense and apprehension;  
the power of the first Adam must die before him,  
and you will cry out, "I am a dead, lost, and undone creature;"  
but there is a life hidden with Christ in God for me,  
but I can never have it, until I am slain into the will of God,  
and have become as a little child, and be stripped of all my own excellence that I have attained;  
and I must come to a sense of my own misery, and fall down at the foot of God;  
when I have become as a little child, humbled and slain as to my own will, and confidence in my own  
righteousness,  
I will not then question but I shall live a holy life,  
but I will give all that life I had, for that life which is hidden with Christ in God.'  
**Oh!—there is none that come so far, that ever miss of eternal life.**  
All shuffling people, that would have salvation by Christ,  
and will not let him exercise his heavenly power, his princely, glorious power to baptize them into his  
death,  
it is they that come short of salvation;  
but all those that yield themselves up to Christ to be redeemed through judgment,  
and are become as little children, these are in a happy state.  
You know that our Lord Jesus Christ took a little child in his arms,  
and said, "Whoever does not come as a little child, cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven:"  
you must all of you become as little children, and depend upon the mercy and free grace of God;  
you must all come to a holy resignation of your wills to God's disposal;  
if you come to Christ as little children, and depend upon him, you cannot miss of salvation;  
it is bestowed upon such souls that hear the voice of Christ,  
**"they that hear the voice of the Son of God shall live."**

I stand here as a witness for the God of heaven,  
I never heard the voice of Christ (as his follower)  
until I was slain and baptized, and lay as a little child under his heavenly chastisements;  
as soon as ever my soul was brought to this, in my humiliation,  
Oh! then, the dreadful judgment was taken away, and the book of life was opened unto me,  
and the Lord spoke comfortably to me, 'I have loved you with an everlasting love:'  
and I was made a Christian through a day of vengeance, and of burning as an oven;  
and the haughtiness and pride of man in me was brought low.  
Now in this conformity to Christ's death, people may die into life,  
and blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow  
them.  
Away with all your own wills, and your pride, and haughtiness;  
and your hypocrisy and deceit, and all dependence upon any qualifications of your own;  
you must come to have your life separated from you, else you will all perish.  
Those that will die with Christ, and be willing to die for him, **he is revealed as a Savior to  
them.**  
He was before us in the days of his flesh, and complied with his Father's will; he was nailed to the cross.  
The Son of God, when he had come to the depth of his sufferings, what  
was his cry, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me!'  
This was for your sake, and my sake, and every man's and woman's sake that believe in him;  
he drank the cup which his Father gave him to drink.  
If it was done thus to the green tree, what shall be done unto the dry?  
He went before us, and when he comes again, he will take us to himself,  
and take us from the filth of sin, that we may be made new creatures."  
Now except we are born again, we cannot enter into the kingdom of God,  
and there is no becoming new creatures, until we are slain to the old man.  
**You must be slain to your pride, and haughtiness, and the corruption of your own will,  
and all selfishness, you must have God to burn it up in you.  
The Holy Ghost will destroy, and burn up nothing in you,  
but that which will bring an eternal fire upon your soul.'**  
Show me, you whom my soul loves,

where is the path of life, the footsteps of the flock of your companions?

Why should I be as one that goes aside?

Now every one that lives at home in the bosom of self, take this with you, though you profess the Truth, and live in an outward conformity to it, yet if you secretly indulge your corrupt wills, and live a flesh-pleasing life, and consult with flesh and blood, and are not torn away from your lusts, you cannot enjoy the Lord of Life:

'while I am at home in the body, I am absent from the Lord.'

The body of sin is a loadstone to draw you from the life of God, and from glorying in the cross of Christ: this is flesh and blood, and flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

For the Lord's sake, for your soul's sake, and for the sake of your eternal happiness,

**do not put off this work, but pursue it, and it will be perfected.**

**See how Christ is revealed in you by the Holy Ghost, and with fire.**

God will redeem you by the Spirit of judgment and burning: it is not ranging abroad in your minds, but you must "know Christ is in you except you be rebornes:"

if he has set your eyes and hearts upon himself, and made you to water your couch with your tears;

if he has broken your sleep, so as you have cried out,

"I shall be damned, and never come to salvation;" (this will be your cry, it was once my cry):

O let not your eyes slumber, nor your eyelids take any rest, until you are sure the Lord is your God.

if you find these qualifications, you are on your way,

otherwise you will be like a deceitful bow, and never abide in judgment;

if you reject the counsel of God against yourselves, and refuse to be crucified with Christ,

and to be baptized with *his* baptism, you will never have life;

but only by his baptism, and through the heavenly operation of his Spirit,

if you have faith in Christ's name, you shall be married to him in everlasting righteousness;

salvation shall be brought to us, and eternal life be bestowed upon us;

even that life which is hidden with Christ in God,

he will give to every poor mournful soul that submits to his blessed will, and believes in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is not a faith of our own making, nor a garment of our own embroidery, but that which the Lord has given to us.

Oh happy man or woman, that obtains this gift of God!

Oh, who will not lose their lives for this everlasting life?

Who will not die for this eternal life?

*Now, the matter lies in the death of your own wills;*

when you have done the will of God, then - watch that your own wills are slain,

and that your cursed self takes not the jewels of God, and his bracelets and ornaments,

and bestows them upon self, to paint and deck the cursed self;

and take not the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot.

If you are dead to your own wills, you are risen with Christ, and shall receive a resurrection to eternal life.

**Crucify self, and set the world at nothing, and trample upon it,**

**and all the things of it, and count them as dross and dung in comparison of Christ,**

whom the Father has revealed to be our life, in the days of our sorrow and mourning,

in the day of our calamity, in the day when we cried, 'Our hope is lost!'

Thus it has been with the holiest people on earth;

it is not by works of righteousness of your own that you can be saved;

Christ comes to cut all these down, that you may be engrafted into him, and justified by his grace.

Do not make this a matter of talk, and say, I have heard this and that;

but look into your own hearts, and see what heavenly workings are there.

What is there that is *of* the power of the Lord Jesus,

that has made you to loathe this world, and the inordinate love of the man,

that you may enjoy all these things as if you enjoyed them not.

We cannot, when we are slain and crucified to this world, but say,

'My life is in Christ,' when we come to ascribe nothing to ourselves, and all to Christ.

Here is a blessed harmony, broken hearts, melted spirits, and yet joyful souls;

poor creatures, that were mourning, and sighing, and crying before the Lord in retired places,

and yet rejoicing in Christ Jesus, 'I am risen with Christ;'

I said, 'My hope is cut off, I will lie down in your will, O God; do what you will with me,

it is in your sovereign pleasure and free gift, whether you give me life or deny it to me.'

There must be a resignation of ourselves to the will of God.

It was so with the Lord Jesus and it is so with every true saint of God.

You must be humbled as little children, before the judgment is taken away,

and the loving kindness of God sealed upon your souls.

**If you seek this work of God, you will find it;**

if you seek it upon your beds, in all your labors and concerns, in all your stations and relations;

if you press after the new birth, you must use this world as if you used it not,  
and live a married life as if you were unmarried,  
for the fashion of this world passes away. This is not high notions.

**But, let me tell you, a new world comes by regeneration.**

A man is not lifted up in his own mind, but laid low in his own eyes,  
he waits for the wisdom of God to govern him,  
and he is as a steward of the grace of God, to give to them that stand in need.  
When a man is regenerated and born again,  
he is as contented with bread and water, as with all the enjoyments of this world:— what is the  
difference?

His own will is gone, and put down under his feet,  
and whatever it is that gives life to all his vain desires and affections;  
there is a harmony of all within, a man praising of God, and blessing his holy name.  
There are no entanglements to draw away the heart from serving of God, and seeking his glory;  
and if God shall call the husband from the wife, or the wife from the husband, for the glory of his name,  
there is no whining and complaining, and crying out, but giving them up,  
and a praising and blessing God, when they are called to such an exercise;  
and if they are not called to that, then they set their hearts to glorify God in their several places and  
stations;

then they have a full content in a blessed resignation.

Here their wills are slain, but they praise God they have no desire,  
but, 'Lord, your will be done!' always praising God, always having the fear and the glory of God before  
their eyes.

All the mischief is hatched in pleasing men's own wills;  
that is, the counsel of every heart that Christ does not govern.

Will you live as the Quakers? Then you must live contemptibly,  
the mistress and the maid are 'hail fellows well met.'

Every one must walk in humility, and live in acquaintance with the God of heaven;  
she that is wrought upon by the same Spirit, must with all diligence behave herself as becomes a servant  
of the Lord.

**Here is now a new world, and the fashions of the old world are gone;  
pride, haughtiness, crossness, and trampling upon one another are all  
gone,  
all slain through the operation of Christ.**

What remains now,—Christ is in me, and we are all one in him;  
Christ laid down his life for you and me; now he reigns in me,  
and he has prepared my body to die for the Truth,  
as his prepared body was laid down for my sin.

It is a kind of foolish profession, to make profession of Christ,  
and live in covetousness, profaneness, sensuality, and the like;  
they that have come to this heavenly birth, seek the things that are above, you can do nothing else.  
Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good.

You must be engrafted into the vine of God's righteousness:  
Oh slight not the day of your visitation.

What was it to me to read of any being born again, until I was slain,  
and knew the heavenly baptism of Christ Jesus?

Till I saw the flaming sword ready to slay me in every way, in every turning.  
The light of Christ convinced me of sin, and his righteousness justified me,  
and those works were abominable to me, that hindered my soul's passage to Christ;  
Christ Jesus in marrying my soul to himself seized upon me, and did work effectually in me.  
There is the testimony of Christ in me, he has sealed up my soul to the day of my redemption.  
Here is a certain passage, and a certain way which never any miss of, that lose their lives for Christ.

**If you are not ready and willing to lose your lives for Christ, you shall  
never come here;**

the gate is strait, and the way is narrow, none come here but those that die into a heavenly oneness with  
Christ.

O Friends, let us empty ourselves, that Christ may fill us;

let us be nothing in our own eyes, that we may be all in him, and receive of his fullness.

Now I commend you to God's witness, that you may remember what has been spoken among you.  
But consider, if you do not listen to it, it will follow you, and be a plague to you to all eternity.

If you will not yield up yourselves to Christ, this day that burns like an oven,  
this fire you must dwell with when out of the body, there will be no quenching of this fire forever;  
but if you are so wise for your souls, as to resign yourselves up to Christ,  
and come to him as little children, this will not hinder your earthly concerns;  
though the world may account you a fool, yet you have that part of heavenly wisdom to do what you do

as unto God.

You conduct yourself to your wife, as in the sight of God, that she may be sanctified to you, and you to her;

and you conduct yourself becomingly to your children and servants,

and you will abound in grace, and in every good work, which will be for your eternal welfare.

O, I beseech you, people, for the Lord's sake,

wait for the light of Christ to guide you;

learn of him to be meek and lowly, then you are happy;

for he dwells with the humble, but he beholds the proud from far away.

This new birth, which is a true work, a sincere and heavenly work,

which will make you [happy] forever.

Oh make room for Christ in your hearts, or else he is never likely to dwell with you;

he loves to dwell with the poor and humble and contrite spirit,

he abhors the proud; he will empty your souls, that he may fill them.

And so I commend you to God.

I have been long held in imprisonment under great weakness;

and I was restless, until I could come up to this great city of London,

to preach the everlasting gospel among you, and you see I am among you here:

pray, every one of you, turn inward;

let not these words, passing through a dishonorable vessel, be as a bare empty discourse of Truth to you,

which you only hear, and take no further care of your salvation.

Take heed of despising the light that shines in the midst of you,

and be pressing forward to the heavenly work that is laid in the power of Christ Jesus,

even through judgment into death, and then he will give eternal life;

the Lord confirm this, that it may rest upon your hearts, that you may be dead to the things of the world.

"We have not to come to Mount Sinai, that genders to bondage,

but we have come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,

and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born which are written in heaven,

and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant,

and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel."

This is the inheritance of the redeemed of the Most High, blessed be the name of the Lord!

Let us rest in hope, until he bring us to humility and lowliness of mind,

that he may clothe us with heavenly glory, according to his promise,

'I will beautify my house with glory,' said the Lord.

This is the portion of a poor people, that cast down themselves before the Lord,

that he may lift them up, and **be all in all to them,**

in whose blessed presence **they shall have joy, and rivers of pleasures at his right hand forevermore!**

End

## A general Epistle given forth from the Spirit of the Lord to the Early Quakers

Dear Friends,

CALLED in the light of the Lord to stand living witnesses for him upon the earth among the children of men: oh! the bowels of the love of the Lord which is in my heart to you, that when I was near to death, to the sight of all that saw me, as to the outward man, and scarce able to speak, I was constrained to give forth the substance of what is now sent among you, for a perfect discovery of your conditions. Seeing that many are called and few chosen, and many convinced that are not converted; therefore are these lines written, that you may truly know whether you be born again, and redeemed from the earth, yes or no.

And unto that, let every man and woman search their hearts with the light of the Lord, and it will truly manifest whether you are born again, and so feed upon the tree of life, or whether you rest in outward formal conformity to the Truth, having the heart in the earth, for that spirit will turn against Truth, as it has done. Some others are drawn to delight their hearts in the gifts, parts, and knowledge, which the Lord has given them, more than in the Lord, the fountain from where they come; and so abuse the gift, and feed upon the fruit of the tree of knowledge which puffs up, and makes man wise in his own eyes, and to say in his heart,—'I am wise and rich, and see, and want nothing,' when they are blind, miserable, naked, and need all things. Whatever any profess, as to the service of God, that are in this condition, they have an end to themselves in what they do, which grieves the Spirit of the Lord, when men and

women in a talkative spirit take upon them to declare the Truth, when the Lord neither calls them, nor speaks by them; so the children born of the royal seed are burdened, (for such have turned against the Truth, and the children born of it), whom the Lord has and will ease in the day determined, when all mouths shall be closed in silence, but those which are opened by him, and not any voice be heard, but his own Spirit speaking in and through his own children, born of him, who alone seek his glory, and not anything for themselves, which must be denied. Therefore, seeing the enemy's wiles are great and many, let all dread the Lord; and those who have been led astray, wait in the heart-searching light, to see where the mystery of iniquity led them forth, and return to the light, to judge down proud exalted self which has turned against the Truth, and to bring into true poverty and abhorring of self; waiting at the throne of grace, for the Lord to raise you up in the resurrection which raised up Jesus from the dead; and in this life, contentious self is buried in death, and the true unity is known, where the Lord alone is exalted in purity, joy, love, and peace in all his, from the least to the highest growth, and all flesh is abased before him, who is worthy of all obedience, praise, and glory forever, Amen.

And all dear Friends and Brethren that love the light, and rejoice in the judgments of the Lord, to have subtle self buried in the true death, that whatsoever gifts of the Spirit the Lord gives unto you, and the enemy tempts you ever so strongly to puff you up in a self-priding spirit, in what you have received of the Lord; yet his fear is so minded by you, which keeps you in a true sense of your nothingness and emptiness in yourselves, which causes you to wait in true self-denial, for the daily assistance, and renewal of your strength in the resurrection of life in the Lord Jesus; and the more he manifests his power with you, the more empty and nothing you appear in your own eyes. And so is the true birth known, which makes self of no reputation, that the Lord may be exalted in his unlimited power, in manifesting himself in the poverty, emptiness, and nothingness of his people who are born of him, that no flesh may glory before him; but that all in truth say,—'The Lord does all in me, and through me, and the Lord shall have the glory; and I will sit in the dust at his feet with all my brethren and sisters, to serve him (through whom we are raised up to sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus), and his people, in what I may, while I have a being among the sons of men, to the glory of his name forever.' And this is the state of the true disciples of Christ that cannot feed on the fruit of the tree of knowledge, although in your journey and travels, dear vessels of the Lord, you see the tree of knowledge to be good, where it stands in its place, but the fruit is not good to eat and feed upon, because knowledge puffs up, but grace makes humble.

Therefore, dear Brethren and Sisters, born of God, who cannot live in any enjoyment, but as you enjoy the life and presence of God, from where every good and perfect gift comes; and, dear lambs, although some of you be, in your own eyes, the poorest among the people of the Lord; yes, sometimes your trials are so great, that you are ready to account yourselves unworthy to be numbered among the people of the Lord, and yet you dare not disobey him, neither can you live without his presence:—Oh, you dear children of God! lift up your heads over all temptations and accusations of the enemy; for your groans and cries are entered into the ears of the Lord God, who in the bowels of his love and mercies does constrain me to proclaim the day of the tender compassion of the Lord, to all you who are truly poor in your spirits. Oh! blessed are you among the children of men, for yours is the kingdom of God:—therefore be not weary of waiting upon the Lord, for in his own time he will turn your sorrows into joy, and give to you the spirit of praises for the spirit of heaviness, as he has done to many who have endured the like temptations, trials, and sufferings, under which you wait this day for deliverance; and the Lord will be the same to you. Therefore be of good comfort; for as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, so is the Son of Man lifted up in the light and covenant of life, to heal your wounds, and save you from sin, and to give you victory over the enemy in all his appearances; so that you, through faith in the name of Christ, making war in righteousness, and fighting the good fight in keeping the faith, will be made more than conquerors through his love that he will shed abroad in your hearts, which will cause you to speak of his goodness, and praise his name for all his mercies.

And all dear children of the Lord, who witness in measure that you are truly baptized into his death, and so are made partakers of his resurrection, as is before written, which is the life that worships him according to his own will, and so is truly accepted of him,—watch and pray, that you may be guided in the power of his Spirit in all your ways; and be careful that not any be hasty to utter words before the Lord, neither suffer any sighs or groans, or anything to be heard to pass through you, but as you have the seal of the Spirit of the Lord, that he requires it of you; this I am commanded to lay as a charge upon you, so that all flesh may be truly silent before the Lord, and not any voice be heard, but the living Spirit of the Lord speaking in his people, which, you that wait in the fear of the Lord, and mind his leadings, may truly know; as it is written, so do his children witness,—'He that has my word, said the Lord, let him speak my word faithfully; is not my word like a fire and a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?' Therefore, all mind to feel the word of the Lord speaking in you, that the pure burning life of the Spirit may be tasted and felt in whatsoever you be exercised in, so that you may be fully assured it is not your own work, as man speaking of God, but the Lord alone uttering *his own voice* in the forcible power of his own Spirit, in what you are exercised in, whether it be to pray in sighs, or groans, or in words, or to speak in exhortation or praises. You are not to quench the Spirit of the Lord in this his day, that he is come and does appear, in giving many gifts unto his people, in his appearance, as he did among his

disciples who waited at Jerusalem for the pouring forth of his Spirit from on high; but they that were strangers to the work of the Spirit, could not taste the life that spoke in them, but said, they were mad, and full of new wine; but the Lord justified them, it being the work of his own Spirit, and although he gave unto them various gifts, yet all in the unity of himself, in which they sacrificed, in returning to the Lord his own with advantage, to the glory of his great name, as his children do this day. Blessed be his name forever, that out of the mouths of babes his praise is declared, in their measures, as it is with those of higher growth in the Lord; and so do the faithful laborers reap the fruit for which they travail, that all the people of the Lord may be filled with his Spirit, and in the exercise and leadings thereof, become a body of living ministers, and a family of prophets; the strong leading the weak by the hand and in tender love, building up one another in their most holy faith, which gives the victory over the world, to reign in the heavenly dominion, which causes the children of the Most High, in the authority of the Lord, to say to the greatest persecutors,—‘Oh man! do what you have power, the God whom we serve is able to deliver us out of your hand; but if he will not, we are resolved in his strength to suffer what he permits man to do;’ and this is the holy resolution of all that are born again, and cannot hide your heads in the time of persecution, because you are born of the royal seed, and have overcome the beggarly, cowardly, earthly spirit, through the blood of the Lamb, and the word of your testimony, and no more love your lives unto death.

And all dear chosen vessels of the Lord, seeing he has manifested his grace so largely to you, with all diligence be obedient in walking suitably to his love and mercy received; that as living witnesses for God, you may shine forth in the beauty of holiness in all your ways. And be careful in keeping your meetings at the time appointed, every one endeavoring to be the first at the meeting, so that not any give way to a careless spirit, as some have done, and come to meetings when others have been a considerable time together, and so become a burden to the diligent and obedient servants of the Lord; thus, the meetings are not so profitable to your comfort, as when you meet diligently at the time, waiting in the fear of the Lord to feel his sweet presence, which will keep you awake in the life of his own Spirit, to the glory of his name, and the comfort of one another, which will cause you to prize the opportunities God gives to you, not knowing how soon you may be deprived of them. And be tender one over another, and watch over one another with a pure single eye, and every one see the beam cast out of your own eye, before you go to spy a speck in others; and if any brother or sister offend, you that know, speak to them privately, in all tenderness, to restore them; and this know, ‘whoever turns a sinner from the error of his ways, saves a soul from death, and hides a multitude of sins.’ But if they will not hear, take two or three more, and speak to them again in the spirit of meekness, waiting, and seeking the Lord for their recovery; but if they will not hear, but persist in wickedness, then acquaint the church, whom the Lord in his wisdom will order to deal with them for his own glory.

And in all things you do, I dearly beseech you, do unto others, as you would be done unto yourselves, so that you may all in your measures, stand as saviors upon mount Zion, to the glory of the Lord, in the power of his own Spirit, which will cause the whisperer, backbiter, false accuser, and tale-bearer to be cleansed away, and cast out of the house of the Lord; so that, in the good order of the Holy Spirit of our God, we may all live; that he alone in his dominion may reign in us, and among us, whose government is upon his shoulder, and all the crowns of the glory of man cast down at his feet, that he may be exalted in ordering every member of the body in their place and service, to his everlasting praise and glory.—Even so, dear Father! carry on your work in all the churches of the saints, scattered over the face of the earth, that in the eternal unity they may be established in the Lord, (being one, and his name one), and all the contrary swept away with the breath of your mouth, and brightness of your coming:—so come, Lord Jesus! take to you your great power, and reign in your authority *in* and among your dear children, to the astonishment of the nations, and all people that are not born again, and to the exaltation of your own name and kingdom over all, who are worthy to reign, blessed forever, and of whose dominion there is no end!

And all you faithful laborers in the gospel of Christ, who in true innocence travail in his strength, and seek not anything for yourselves in what you do, but to glorify the Lord in establishing his people in the living unity in his own Spirit:—Oh! blessed are you among the people; my soul praises the Lord for you, and blesses his name, that ever he raised up such a spirit in you; that in all the greatest riches of the Spirit God gives to you, yet you remain truly poor in yourselves, and in deep humility become servants to his people for the Lord’s sake; and being poor, you make many rich in that which will abide fresh and green in the winter storms, and will not fade away in the terrible blasts which will come for the trial of his people, and cause all hearts to fail, but what are born of his own nature. Oh! dearly beloved Brethren, feel my bowels of enlarged love, which flows to you in the love and life received and enjoyed through death, where there is no variableness nor shadow of change.

I remain your brother, in the word of his patience, to endure the suffering, according to his determination, with all that love the Lord better than their lives.

Warwick [common jail,]  
14th of 10th month, 1668

William Dewsbury lived in the 17th Century and was a remarkable new creature of Christ, speaking and writing with great authority, wisdom, love, hope, and truth. He spent twenty years in prisons, suffering for his testimony of Truth. This sermon and letter are only a small sample of his wonderful writings, many more of which are available on this site. [Click to read.](#)

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by benefiting from the changing power of God through the cross,  
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