GROWING in the LIGHT

Toward a Better Understanding of Quakerism Today

Lessons I – IX: For Adults and Senior High Students

A Multi-age Curriculum for Unprogrammed Friends

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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Title</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Introduction</td>
<td>Ivory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergenerational Openings: Lessons I - VIII</td>
<td>Buff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons I - IX for Adults and Senior Highs</td>
<td>Pink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Support Group Option for Lessons V - VIII</td>
<td>Cherry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons I - VIII for Grades Six to Eight</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons I - VIII for Grades One to Five</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons I - VIII for Ages Three to Five</td>
<td>Canary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson IX for All Children</td>
<td>Salmon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TITLES FOR LESSONS

- **Lesson I:** "Enter In the Meeting House" - Meeting for Worship, Part 1
- **Lesson II:** "Special Silence" - Meeting for Worship, Part 2
- **Lesson III:** "When Two or Three are Gathered Together in My Name" - Meeting for Business
- **Lesson IV:** "The Seekers of the Light Are One" - Membership and Meeting Structure
- **Lesson V:** "Do Unto Others..." - The Testimonies - #1 - Community
- **Lesson VI:** "In His Image..." - The Testimonies - #2 - Equality
- **Lesson VII:** "The World In Tune" - The Testimonies - #3 - Harmony
- **Lesson VIII:** "'Tis the Gift to Be Simple" - The Testimonies #4 - Simplicity
- **Lesson IX:** "A Quaker Is ..."
GROWING IN THE LIGHT

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Growing In The Light quite literally grew from an initial idea into a full-scale curriculum. Several years ago at Media and Providence Meetings we saw the need for First-Day School classes on Quakerism, but were unable to find the appropriate resources. As a result we developed our own series of lessons. Those classes brought together a group of Friends and non-Friends, both young and old. Each week all ages considered the same topic; to introduce that topic we included an intergenerational opening time every week. We found that newcomers as well as long-time Friends participated together in an atmosphere of mutual sharing and seeking. The children, exploring the same topics as the adults, felt part of the larger Meeting community.

This curriculum, while much expanded from that earlier effort, retains our commitment to lessons which will involve both new and long-time Friends and attenders and which will include cross-generational experiences.

Purpose

This curriculum will help participants - both those new to Quakerism and long-time Friends - better understand Quaker beliefs, process and practice. It allows all ages to learn and seek together during intergenerational opening times. By providing common topics for all ages, it gives families a chance to share their thoughts and feelings about Quakerism. While Quaker history enters into this curriculum, it is not a history course but an exploration of Quaker faith.

Process

1. Planning
   A. A coordinator is needed for the series. That person needs to read all
      the lessons.
   B. Each age level needs at least two teachers.
   C. All teachers should read the general introduction, the
      intergenerational openings, and the introduction for their age group.
   D. Individual teachers need to read and prepare each lesson.
   E. Name tags are needed each week. An opening social time every week
      gives people a chance to relax and talk together before class.

2. Timing
   This curriculum has nine lessons for each age group as well as an
   intergenerational opening for each week except the ninth. You will need at
   least one hour per week - 15 minutes for the opening and 45 minutes for classes
   by age-group. Most lessons have more than enough material for 45 minutes. You
   may find you want to expand the number of lessons so that you can use more of
   the available material.

3. Age Groups
   There are nine lessons for:
   - Ages 3-5
   - Grades 1-5
   - Grades 6-8
   - Senior High and Adults
These groupings are flexible. Your particular set of children may not fit well into these groupings. If so, revise the groups. Many of the activities are not age-specific. If you have one wide-age-range group, read all the lessons and pick and choose what you want to use. Do provide at least three teachers for such a wide-age-range class. Senior Highs and Adults can use the same lessons; they can meet together or separately. We find that older teenagers will often share more openly if they are separated from the adult group.

If you do not have an adult First-Day Class, use only the children's lessons. The adult lessons will work just as well during evening discussion times, a Meeting retreat, or other settings in which adults gather for education and nurture.

4. Content

Lesson topics are listed in the Table of Contents. The intergenerational openings for all the lessons are grouped together, followed by sets of lessons (color-coded) for each age group. For lessons V-VIII, there are two options for adults, one on living the testimonies in the home, the other on living the testimonies in the Meeting and wider community. Lesson IX for the children brings all ages together; for adults it is a panel discussion for the whole group.

5. Questions

Call or write the Religious Education Office, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Friends Center, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102; 215-241-7221.

Credits

We are grateful to many members of Media and Providence Meetings and of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Religious Education Committee for their ideas and suggestions. We especially appreciate the support of Patricia Howe, clerk of the Religious Education Committee.

We also thank Molly Haines, the Administrative Assistant for the Committee, for the long hours of typing, retyping, formatting and reformatting which this curriculum required. Without her dedicated and skillful help this publication would not exist.

September, 1984

As a seed, mustard is smaller than any other; but when it is grown it is bigger than any garden plant; it becomes a tree big enough for the birds to roost among its branches.

Matthew 13:32
INTERGENERATIONAL OPENINGS

INTRODUCTION:

This section contains an intergenerational opening for each lesson except Lesson IX*. These openings include songs and several questions for the whole group. Use as many or as few of these as is appropriate for your group. The questions introduce the day's topic. The leader should encourage the children in the group to respond to these questions. After the questions the leader briefly introduces the day's topic and helps the group divide into age groups. If members of the group are not well acquainted or there are newcomers, set aside time for introductions and provide name tags each week.

The opening time will take 10 - 20 minutes. Rotate the leadership among the teachers of the various age groups. Use these openings even if you have no adult group; simply use them with all the children together. After the opening time divide into age groups.

*For Lesson IX, the adult session is a panel discussion and the children's session is a closing celebration. Because both these activities take a full hour, we did not include an intergenerational time that week.
LESSON I  "ENTER IN THE MEETING HOUSE"  MEETING FOR WORSHIP, PART 1

We have found it true that the spirit of man can come into direct contact with the Spirit of God.  
*Christian Faith and Practice*, #233

**Songs:** Choose among:  
"George Fox Song"  
"Enter In the Meeting House"  
"Special Silence"  
*Songs of the Spirit* #3  
*Songs of the Spirit* #13  
*Songs of the Spirit* #6

**Questions:**

1. When you hear the word "Quaker" what words or impressions come to mind?  
   - Record responses on newsprint; participants may wish to add to or subtract from this list in future weeks. You may need to explain the words "Quaker" and "Friend", if you have newcomers.

2. What is Quaker worship time called?

3. Describe Meeting for Worship

4. Why do you think your family comes to Meeting for Worship?

**Introducing the Topic:** (Feel free to use your own words)

Today we are beginning a series of lessons on Quakerism. We will talk about what Friends believe and how Friends practice those beliefs in worship and in daily life. All of us in our separate age groups will be discussing the same topics. Families can continue to talk about these themes at home. Today we will begin to learn about Meeting for Worship — especially about why Friends choose to worship in this special way.
Friends, meet together and know one another in that which is eternal, which was before the world was.

George Fox

Songs: Same as for Lesson I

Questions:

1. Has anyone been to another kind of worship service besides Friends Meeting? What was that service like?
2. Why do you think Friends worship the way they do?
3. What do you do in Meeting for Worship?
4. What is a minister? Who is the minister in a Friends Meeting?

Introducing the Topic:

Today we will consider what is happening in the silence of a Friends Meeting. Silence, listening and prayer are important words in today's lesson.
Meetings for the transaction of business are conducted in the same expectant waiting for the guidance of the spirit as is the meeting for worship.

Faith and Practice, p. 17

Songs: Select from those in Lesson I and add:

"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"  A Hymnal for Friends #83
(Revised words in Songs of the Spirit #125)

Questions:

1. When you are with a group of friends, how do you decide what you're going to do? Does everyone have a say?
2. Do you ever ask someone else to help you with a difficult decision? Do you ever ask God to help?
3. Do you know how Friends try to make decisions? Describe that process briefly.
4. Why don't Friends vote in Business Meeting?

Introducing the Topic:

Friends have a special way of making decisions. They have a Meeting for Business. At a Meeting for Business Friends decide what to do as a group. They may be deciding what color to paint the meeting room or how to conduct a wedding. But whatever they are deciding, they ask for God's help in making the decision and they listen carefully to each person. By looking for a common thread in the opinions expressed, the Meeting arrives at a decision without voting. Today we will learn more about Meeting for Business.
The test for membership should not be doctrinal agreement, nor adherence to certain testimonies, but evidence of sincere seeking and striving for the Truth, together with an understanding of the lines along which Friends are seeking that Truth.

Christian Faith and Practice, #368

Songs: Select from those in Lesson I and add:
     "'Tis the Gift to be Simple", Songs of the Spirit #46

Questions:

1. What gives you the feeling of belonging to a group?
2. When have you had the feeling that you are "in the place just right"?

Introducing the Topic:

Today we are going to talk about belonging, especially belonging to the Society of Friends. If we belong to a group, we expect to receive certain things, to benefit in some way, but we also expect to give something to the group. As Friends, what do we expect to give to and receive from our Meetings? For those of you who are not members of a Friends meeting, this session is a chance to think and talk about what membership in a meeting means.
Be Patterns, be examples ... that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people.

George Fox

Songs: Choose among:

"How Can I Keep from Singing?"  Songs of the Spirit #2
"No Man [One] Is an Island"  Songs of the Spirit #20
"When I Needed a Neighbor"  Songs of the Spirit #29
"He's Got the Whole World In His Hands"  Songs of the Spirit #41
"One Man's Hands"  Songs of the Spirit #58

[Note - This opening is in two parts - a section on Testimonies in general and a section on Community in particular]

Questions, Part 1

1. How do you feel when you do something wrong?
2. How do you know what is right or wrong? Name something you believe is right. Name something you believe is wrong.
3. Does what you believe about what's right and what's wrong affect how you act?

Introducing the Topic, Part 1

Quakers put special emphasis on acting upon their beliefs. For example, if we say telling the truth is important, then we should in fact tell the truth. The next five weeks we are going to learn about what Friends call Testimonies - beliefs made real through action. The testimony we will look at today is community.

Questions, Part 2

1. What work do you do at your house? Do you have as many chores as your mother or father?
2. Do your parents still provide you with food, shelter, clothing, toys - even though you don't do as much work as they do? Why do they do this?
3. Your family is a community in which each person has certain responsibilities and in which each person has certain needs met. What responsibilities and needs do you have?
4. What should the Meeting do if someone in the Meeting can't take care of him/herself?

Introducing the Topic:

We are all part of many communities. The Meeting and the family are two of these communities. Today we will try to understand how these communities, motivated by love and caring, can enrich the lives of their members.

After the opening time for Lessons V-VIII, the adults may choose one of two groups - one concerned with practicing the testimonies in the home - particularly a home with children; the other concerned with practicing the testimonies in the Meeting and wider community. See the Introduction to Adult Sessions for details.
GROWING IN THE LIGHT

LESSON VI "IN HIS IMAGE"

Let the Friendly testimony that there is that of God in every one lead us to cherish every human being regardless of race or class, and to encourage efforts to overcome prejudices and antagonisms.

Fair and Practice, p. 202

Songs: Choose among:
"Dearly Beloved Friends"   Songs of the Spirit #1
"Follow the Drinkin' Gourd" Songs of the Spirit #40
"Oh, Freedom"   Songs of the Spirit #37
"He's Got the Whole World In His Hands" Songs of the Spirit #41

Questions:
2. Why do Friends schools often avoid using Mr. or Mrs. or Miss? What is a title?
3. Have any of you heard Quakers using "thee" for "you"? Do you know why early Friends did this?
4. What does the sign "=" mean?
5. Are there people today who are not always treated as equal to other people?

Introducing the Topic:
Friends' belief in that of God in every one means that every person is worthy of respect. Every person has access to the Inner Light. Practically, this means that from earliest times Friends have worked for equality among people. Two good examples are William Penn's fair treatment of Native Americans and Friends' involvement in the Underground Railroad, which helped free slaves.

After the opening time for Lessons V-VIII, the adults may choose one of two groups - one concerned with practicing the testimonies in the home - particularly a home with children; the other concerned with practicing the testimonies in the Meeting and wider community. See the Introduction to Adult Sessions for details.
GROWING IN THE LIGHT

LESSON VII "THE WORLD IN TUNE"

Love does not recreate our brother [or sister] in our image; it recreates us both in relation to each other, united like limbs of one body yet each distinctly himself.

*Faith and Practice*, p. 94

**Songs:** Choose among:

- "Let There Be Peace on Earth"
- "No Man [One] Is an Island"
- "Dona Nobis Pacem"
- "In Christ There Is No East or West"
- "Magic Penny"
- "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing"

**Questions:**
1. When you are with a friend or a brother or sister, what things help you get along? Do you ever get into arguments or fights? What are these about? Why do they happen?
2. What are some things we can do to settle arguments? Name some good solutions and some bad ones.
3. Can you explain the word "harmony"? (You may want a musical adult or child to explain this word in layman's terms.)

**Introducing the Topic:**

Friends put special emphasis on peaceful settlement of disputes or arguments. Sometimes people think this means Friends never get angry or fight, but, of course, they do. They simply try to find non-violent ways to settle arguments. They try to find non-violent solutions to small-scale and large-scale disputes. Harmony implies that different parts can work together; the parts are still distinct, but they merge together peacefully and with respect for one another.

After the opening time for Lessons V-VIII, the adults may choose one of two groups - one concerned with practicing the testimonies in the home - particularly a home with children; the other concerned with practicing the testimonies in the Meeting and wider community. See the Introduction to Adult Sessions for details.
GROWING IN THE LIGHT

LESSON VIII "'TIS THE GIFT TO BE SIMPLE" TESTIMONIES #4, SIMPLICITY

A life centered in God will be characterized by integrity, sincerity and simplicity ... its activities and expressions should be ... directed toward the simple, direct purpose of keeping one's communication with God open and unencumbered by that which is unessential.

Faith and Practice, p. 19

Songs:
"Dona Nobis Pacem" A Hymnal for Friends #34
"'Tis the Gift To Be Simple" Songs of the Spirit #46

Questions:
1. What does the word "simple" mean? In the song we just sang it has a special meaning; can you figure out what that meaning is?
2. Why do you think Friends try to keep their lives simple or uncluttered? How do you feel when you have too much to do or too much going on at one time?
3. What does it mean to tell the truth? Is it hard to be truthful sometimes? Why? How do you feel when you tell a lie?

Introducing the Topic:
The Shakers who wrote "'Tis the Gift To Be Simple" use the word "simple" to mean uncomplicated, the absence of what is not necessary. Quakers use the word the same way; we seek to keep our lives clear of too many material complications. This is a very hard task in today's world, which is so busy and so full of things. Our worship is very simple - only people trying quietly together to talk to God.

Another way Friends try to be simple is telling the truth. Lies are complicated ways of avoiding the truth. But even if it is simple, truth telling is often hard for all of us, grown-ups as well as children.

After the opening time for Lessons V-VIII, the adults may choose one of two groups - one concerned with practicing the testimonies in the home - particularly a home with children; the other concerned with practicing the testimonies in the Meeting and wider community. See the Introduction to Adult Sessions for details.
INTRODUCTION

Who Are These Lessons For?

These lessons are for both new members and attenders and long-time members of unprogrammed Friends Meetings. All Friends will gain from further reflection on the Meeting for Worship, the Meeting for Business, and the living of the testimonies. And all members and attenders have some experience and insights to share about these vitally important components of our Quaker practice.

Since the format is mainly group discussion, these lessons are useful for groups who wish to get to know one another better or who wish to draw in new people. And if the discussions are in the spirit of helping each other find higher truth and of listening to and learning from each other, they will also help to build community.

Because it more actively engages their thinking, group discussion is a more effective method of learning for most people than being given information through lecture. It also allows the sharing of the experience and wisdom already there in the group. Furthermore, it helps to bring to consciousness latent knowledge and insights which a person may not be fully aware of until s/he hears someone else express something similar and then says it aloud, perhaps in a modified or expanded form. This verbalizing helps bring it to consciousness and to life.

Since the subject of these lessons is our Quaker beliefs and practice, and since we have no written dogma, group discussion or sharing seems most appropriate. Seldom do we have single or right answers to the questions raised in these pages. Rather they are designed for a corporate search.

What Is In The Lessons?

Each lesson contains recommended reading assignments to be done in advance of the lesson by both the participants and the leaders. Supplementary reading is suggested for additional background and understanding. For the books and pamphlets which are used throughout the course, the complete information is listed below. Those which are used for just one or two sessions are listed at the beginning of those particular sessions.

The bulk of each lesson plan contains quotations and questions to be used to stimulate group reflection, discussion, and sharing. The lessons have so much material, any of them could be used for more than one one-hour session. If used for only one session, you, as leader, will need to choose which sections are most important to you and the class. One factor to consider is the size and responsiveness of your group. In order to give everyone a chance to participate you may need to slow the pace, even though that means you cover less material.

Quotations are set off as is customary by quotation marks or wider margins. The questions for discussion and the suggested comments for you to make to the group are in all-caps. Instructions and comments to you, the leader, are usually enclosed by parentheses.
Quotations and questions are interspersed, for they are used in combination with each other. Some of the quotations you will want to read to the group for their reflection. Others will serve to deepen your own understanding. You will need to pick and choose which quotations would be helpful for your group.

Often a quotation introduces a new aspect of a subject, in which case it is usually followed by at least one question. At other times a quotation is used as one possible answer to a question above it. Such a quotation should not be read to the group too soon, for you do not want to cut off other people’s thinking or their wrestling with an issue. Nor should you follow a regular pattern of having a quotation as the final answer to a question, for the group might begin to wait for your answer. You will be able to tell by the context whether a quotation belongs with preceding or succeeding questions.

Sometimes, there are two questions which are very similar to each other. The second one is another way of coming at an issue or principle and can be helpful in illuminating the first question. Or it can be used when you feel that the group has only scratched the surface in answering the first one. If, on the other hand, the group has already covered the topic fully, do not use the second question.

**What Do We Need?**

- Chalk board or large newsprint which can be put on an easel or the wall are recommended for most sessions.
- Name tags for the first few sessions if your group is large and has new people.
- An adequate supply of the books recommended for reading by the participants.
- Most of the books recommended for supplementary reading by the leader(s) on individual lessons are available at the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Library, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA, 191022. Telephone (215) 241-7220. They mail books.

**Basic Texts for the Course:**

- Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice*, revised 1972

**Supplementary Texts:**

- Howard Brinton, *Friends for 300 Years*, Pendle Hill Quakerback, 1965


*The Pendle Hill Book Store gives substantial discounts to Meetings when purchasing Pendle Hill publications in quantity for religious education and will let Meetings have them on consignment.*
How Do We Prepare?

Have texts available in sufficient quantity for participants at least a week ahead of the discussion of them, along with the suggested reading assignments.

Carefully read the lesson plan, the advance reading for the participants, and as much of the supplementary reading as your interest and time allow. Then read over the lesson again and select and mark the most important parts for you and your group.

Think of your own questions in addition to the ones in the lesson plan. The best questions are those which are real questions for you, ones which you would like help in answering. When possible, formulate your questions so that they must be answered in "I Statements", i.e. personally.

Familiarize yourself with the questions and quotations you have selected, so that you do not have to keep your nose in the book, but can find them easily and use them in a different order if the flow of the discussion suggests this.

Remember nametags.

The arrangement of the chairs for your sessions is important. If possible, have the chairs in a circle.

Further Suggestions for Leaders:

Your main responsibility as leader is to offer some material to stimulate thinking, to ask questions, to keep the discussion flowing and on the track, and, perhaps, to draw out the more quiet members. You also can help set the tone by providing a welcoming, friendly, and listening atmosphere.

It is helpful for you to use people's names when you speak to them to help participants learn each others' names.

Listen carefully to the discussion and pick up group members' questions when they are relevant. One of the purposes of this course is to help to answer people's questions. Let others in the group answer them. You are not playing the expert, but are the catalyst and facilitator.

Very often a participant may ask a question which is on your list. Use it then if the group is ready to move to a new question. And recognize that some of your questions may be answered by the group before you have even asked them.

Sometimes, a question or comment from a participant will get you off the course of the discussion or jump ahead too fast. If the latter, ask the person to hold that question or thought until you get to the subject. If the former, you might just have to say that it is off the subject.

Follow the flow of the discussion, but also keep it on the track. Do not let people move to a new question if they have not dealt with the one on the floor. On the other hand, do not make people stay with a question in which there is no interest.
At the same time, recognize that some questions are difficult to answer the first time they are asked. Do not be afraid of silence. In fact, with some questions it is good to ask people to wait a couple of minutes before speaking in order to give everyone a chance to reflect.

Encourage all possible points of view. Try to get people to think for themselves and to think of their own experience.

Do not let participants evaluate a quotation—that is, say they like or dislike it, or agree or disagree with it—until they have worked through to some understanding of its meaning. A too ready negative evaluation hampers further exploration.

As leader you do have responsibility for moving the group along, but at the same time you do not want to curtail deep and fruitful discussion if you have the time to allow it.

Problems?

If you have problems with this adult curriculum, contact Dorothy Reichardt at the Religious Education Office, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 215-241-7221. She would also be interested in your comments or suggestions.
The subject I have chosen is Quaker Worship because I am convinced that this is the most precious gift Friends have to share with others. It is also something on which Quakers themselves cannot too often reflect.

George Gorman, Forward to The Amazing Fact of Quaker Worship

Be sure to read the Introduction to this section for Adult and Senior High groups before trying to work with these lessons. The introduction explains the format and gives some important tips.

The division between Lessons I and II is somewhat arbitrary. You may find that it falls elsewhere, for it depends upon how much time you and the group spend on each aspect of the Meeting for Worship.

Recommended advance reading for participants:
Guide to Quaker Practice - pp. 5-21
Faith and Practice - pp. 14-16, 78-79

Supplementary reading - especially for leader(s):
Friends for 300 Years, Howard Brinton, Chapter 4
Christian Faith and Practice - Chapter 4
The Gathered Meeting by Thomas Kelly, small pamphlet published by the Tract Association of Friends, 1515 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102

Other Resources:
Tape of the radio broadcast, "The Living Silence", available from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Library

Materials needed:
Chalk board or newsprint and marker
Outline of course for each person, if you wish to be that formal
(For this you may photocopy our Table of Contents.)

Introductions (This is important even though you may have had introductions in the larger group):

IN THIRTY SECONDS OR LESS (can give a minute if the group is small), INTRODUCE YOURSELF BY TELLING YOUR NAME AND WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE TODAY. I'LL GIVE YOU A MINUTE OR TWO TO THINK OF WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY BEFORE I BEGIN THE PROCESS. THAT WAY WE SHALL ALL BE ABLE TO LISTEN BETTER. (Introduce yourself first as a model. You might say why you feel this is an important course to teach. Remember to be brisk.)

(It might also help you as a leader to ask for a show of hands of how many are birthright Friends, how many convinced Friends, and how many attenders. [Explain the term, attenders.] This will not be divisive if done in an accepting, welcoming attitude and with the realization that being a birthright Friend does not necessarily make one a knowledgeable one.)
(Give the group a general outline of the course, either orally or in writing, and tell those who have not already done so how they can obtain the text and other resources if you do not have copies available.)

(Explain that this course is about the practice of unprogrammed Friends—that there are other types of Quakerism.)

Discussion

Basic Beliefs:

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS? (List these on large sheets of newsprint or a chalk board as people suggest them. Here is the list one group made:

- No paid, separate clergy—we are all ministers
- That of God in everyone—Inward Light, Inward Christ, Inward Teacher
- Continuing revelation—direct contact with the Divine Source
- No outward sacraments
- Corporate worship
- We are seekers—open to "new" truths
- Responsibility for living our faith—belief into action
- Every day is holy
- Plain speech
- No written creeds or dogmas
- Corporate testing of leadings and concerns
- Sense of the Meeting as a way of decision making
- Positive, optimistic view
- Bible is not the primary source of truth
- Testimonies

Your group will probably come up with a reasonably complete list without any help. If you do need to "prime the pump" you could ask, "How do Quakers differ in their beliefs from other Christian denominations?" or "What are the beliefs underlying our worship?" or "What are the beliefs underlying our way of conducting business?" Of course, if the group had all the "answers" there would be no need for the course. Have the list there each session and add to it as people think or learn of things which should go on it.)

WITHOUT A WRITTEN CREED OR HIERARCHY, WHAT Keeps FRIENDS FROM ANARCHY?

Friends Meeting for Worship:

WHAT IS IT THAT KEEPS YOU COMING TO MEETING FOR WORSHIP? KEEP YOUR ANSWER TO THIRTY SECONDS. YOU MAY HAVE TO MENTION JUST ONE IMPORTANT REASON OR FEELING. (Again, give the group a few minutes to reflect before anyone answers. You answer first and then have the group take turns around the room, giving people the option to pass. There may be some in your group who have never come to a Friends Meeting for Worship.)

(Read the following from the Forward to The Amazing Fact of Quaker Worship):

The subject I have chosen is Quaker Worship because I am convinced that this is the most precious gift Friends have to share with others. It is also something on which Quakers themselves cannot too often reflect. As soon as I started work I recognized
that this theme is the easiest and the most difficult subject on which to write. The ease lies in the fact that every Quaker has first-hand experience of this subject; it is part of his life. The difficulty is that worship touches at depth the most profound experience of people.

**WHY IS OUR FORM OF WORSHIP "THE MOST PRECIOUS GIFT FRIENDS HAVE TO SHARE WITH OTHERS"?**

ON PAGE 7 GORMAN WRITES, "...TO UNDERSTAND QUAKER WORSHIP IS TO UNDERSTAND THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS." HOW OR WHY IS THAT TRUE?

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MEETING FOR WORSHIP?**

GORMAN Writes (P. 10): "WORSHIPPING THROUGH WAITING IN THE SILENCE IS THE MOST PRECIOUS HERITAGE FROM OUR PAST AND OUR MOST VALUED POSSESSION IN THE PRESENT." WHY IS IT THE WAITING IN THE SILENCE WHICH IS SO IMPORTANT?

Here is another reason why silence is so important in our lives. Gorman (on page 21) quotes William Penn: "...Love silence even in the mind" for "true silence is the rest of the mind; and is to the spirit, what sleep is to the body, nourishment and refreshment." But as Rufus Jones cautions in regard to worship, "Silence itself has no magic." Gorman goes on to say, "It can, in fact, easily become the setting for a drowsy deadness in the mere absence of sound. It should at its best, be vital and invigorating, for worship is creative work, which is absorbing but never dreary or dull...." (p. 41).

**WHAT CAN WE DO TO KEEP THE SILENCE VITAL?**

ON WHICH OF THE QUAKER BELIEFS YOU JUST LISTED IS OUR FORM OF WORSHIP BASED?

Howard Brinton's way of stating an answer is on P. 8: "The Quaker bases his method on belief in a God-centered spiritual universe, the inner truth and meaning of which is in some degree accessible to man."

**WHY GO TO MEETING? WHY NOT JUST WORSHIP IN PRIVATE AT HOME?**

**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CORPORATE WORSHIP AND PRIVATE PRAYER?**

"...A corporate exercise—a lending of our minds to one another."

Gorman, p. 95

I must confess to feeling a slight sense of irritation when people speak of Quaker meetings as being 'a time of prayer', because they usually seem to me to mean by this that each Friend is individually seeking some private communication with God, rather than wholeheartedly joining with others in an act of corporate worship.

Gorman, p. 96

In meeting we have a responsibility to help one another, by being open and sensitive to the conditions of those who are gathered with us. By contributing their attitude of joy and confidence, the joyful can sustain those who are burdened. The anxious can place
their trouble quietly in the growing life of the meeting and know that it will be willingly accepted: for we are a society of friends and this natural sharing is part of what real friendship means.

Gorman, p. 39

WHY DON'T WE QUAKERS HAVE ANY PLANNED PROGRAM? PLANNED SPEAKING? PLANNED SINGING?

WHY DO WE HAVE NO OUTWARD EUCHARIST?

One of the important reasons why Friends have not used outward sacraments, and in particular...Holy Communion, is that they have always been aware, in their meetings for worship, when they are deeply gathered, of the sense of the living spirit of Jesus with them, and they see no reason for outward signs to convey this presence.

Gorman, p. 137

God often seems so terribly absent. I want to emphasize the words *seems to be*, because I am convinced that the depth of meaning expressed by the phrase 'communion with God' is a reality. It can also be known by many people who at first feel it cannot be theirs because the words do not convey to them anything that they are able to identify with their own experiences.

Gorman, p. 52

...we must recognize that the use of outward sacraments by our fellow Christians are valid acts of worship, as real and as effective as any Quaker meeting, and to be treated by us with respect and reverence. At the same time we must hold firmly to our traditional disuse of them in our own meetings.... I feel...when a Friend, or a new-comer, expresses the wish to participate in some form of Holy Communion, as a supplement to his regular sharing in Quaker worship, he should do so, and not be made to feel guilty as a kind of second-class Quaker.

Gorman, pp. 137-8

(If you read any of the above quotations, you would probably want to give participants a chance to respond.)

WHY ARE OUR MEETING ROOMS SO PLAIN? SO DEVOID OF SYMBOLS?

WHEN IS SINGING APPROPRIATE?

WHY NO COLLECTION OF MONEY IN MEETING?


Gorman has a good discussion of "Children and Worship" on pp. 140-142. Here are a couple of interesting comments from these pages:
I am a strong supporter of the view that children should be in at the end rather than at the beginning of meeting. Towards its close the meeting will be at its deepest and most gathered, and children will thus feel the impact of silent worship at its best.

Children have an uncanny knack of knowing the difference between living ministry, as opposed to words that are injected into the meeting for their good. This is why I feel Friends should at any time avoid deliberately speaking to children, for it usually means speaking down to them. In fact, it is an excellent discipline for anyone who speaks in meeting to try to use words and ideas that can be understood by children, and yet speak to the condition of all present, because they arise from the profound depths which, in fact, produces things that are truly simple.
"There is that near you which will guide you; Oh wait for it, and be sure ye keep to it." Isaac Penington

Recommended advance reading for participants:

"The meeting for worship" in Guide to Quaker Practice - pp. 9-27
Faith and Practice, Queries on Meeting for Worship and on Ministry, pp. 188 & 189
The Gathered Meeting, Thomas Kelly, tiny pamphlet published by the Tract Association of Friends, 1515 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Supplementary reading especially for leader(s):

Same as for Session 1
Also, Friends for 300 Years, Chapter 5

Other resources:

Same as for Session 1

Materials needed:

Same as for Session 1
Group's list of basic beliefs from first session

Introductions (It is important to do this each session until all the people in the group know each other).

Discussion

(Here is a quotation for you to read to the group before asking the first questions. It will help them realize that some people do have problems with silent worship.)

The guidance we offer to young and new members is usually most inadequate. They are left to discover as best they can, often with much mental distress, their own way of worship. I was struck recently by the comment of a devout Anglican. 'The Society of Friends,' he said, 'is cruel to its children. It adopts the most difficult and exacting form of worship, one suitable only for mature people of a mystical temperament, and assumes that its children can use it without specific training and instruction.' The criticism is too harsh, and only partly true.... We should never think of allowing a boy to play in a school match without previously giving him hours of coaching.... But we expect him to join in the most difficult activity which man can undertake—the silent worship of God—with a minimum of instruction. Worship is an art and there is a technique which needs to be mastered. Friends have dispensed with the liturgical aids which the vast majority of Christians feel to be necessary, but that does not mean that they are free to ignore all mental disciplines of silent prayer. Otherwise our worship will be nothing more than an unspoken exercise in the psychological game of free association—a
succession of day dreams with a religious flavour. A silent meeting can have an outward air of sanctity, and yet be nothing more than a collection of inward chitterlings.


"WHAT DO YOU DO IN SILENT WORSHIP TO MAKE YOURSELVES MORE AVAILABLE TO THE SPIRIT?" (Pacific Yearly Meeting) or HOW DO YOU CENTER DOWN? WHAT PROBLEMS DO YOU HAVE WITH THE SILENCE? WE ARE NOT ALL NATURAL MYSTICS; AND WE ARE HERE TO HELP EACH OTHER. (Have people take turns sharing around the circle on this topic. Ask them to be brief. Give everyone 3 or 4 minutes to reflect before you begin the sharing.)

I well remember the first occasion I attended Meeting. After a quarter of an hour or so I felt intense fatigue of mind and body, and the remaining period was a prolonged agony of waiting, quite different from the boredom I experienced during many a sermon in chapel. Even now, after years of practice, I frequently find that my powers of worshipping joyously are exhausted long before the prescribed period of an hour is over.

Green, p. 12

WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE SILENCE?

The barren coldness of many of our Meetings is due to the plain truth that Friends have gathered from custom, but are unprepared, and the Holy Spirit finds an empty hearth with no fire to be lit.

Green, pp 16-17

HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR MEETING?

What conditions favor a gathered meeting? Let us venture upon the question in an attitude of humility....

One condition for such a group experience seems to be this: Some individuals need already, upon entering the meeting, to be gathered deep in the spirit of worship. There must be some kindled hearts when the meeting begins.... The spiritual devotion of a few persons, silently deep in active adoration, is needed to kindle the rest, to help those others who enter the service with tangled, harried, distraught thoughts to be melted and quieted and released and made pliant, ready for the work of God and His Real Presence.

There is a real invisible work of kindling and of mutual assistance in worship which some of the worshippers must do, directing it upon others along with themselves. It is an internal work of prayer.... It is an awakening and an attuning that goes on with energy in the soul. In power and labor one lifts the group, in inward prayer.... Where this inward work of upholding prayer is wholly absent I am not sure that a gathered meeting is at all likely to follow.

This means a preceding preparation for worship. Worship, and preparation for worship, begin before one has left one's home. They begin when one wakes up on Sunday morning, before one has
gotten out of bed. Worship in a meeting-house with one's friends should be only a special period of a life of worship that underlies all one's daily affairs.

Thomas Kelly, The Gathered Meeting, Sect. III

Gorman also recommends a daily withdrawal.

Helen Hole feels that we must nourish our spirits by reading the Bible and other devotional literature.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN TO SPEAK?

(Pages 17-18 of Guide to Quaker Practice have very helpful suggestions, if group has trouble with this question.)

The most valuable things said in meeting are those that honestly reflect real experience and are expressed simply.

Gorman, p. 100

It is by responding to this sense of transcendence in our deepest being that spoken contributions arise in meeting.

Gorman, p. 105

When one rises to speak in such a [gathered] meeting one has a sense of being used, of being played upon, of being spoken through.

The Gathered Meeting, Sect. III

HOW CAN YOU TELL WHETHER THE "MESSAGE" OR INSIGHT IS JUST FOR YOU OR TO BE SHARED WITH THE MEETING?

Anyone who feels drawn to speak should accept the discipline of asking some questions of himself before he opens his mouth. The chief object of these questions is that he shall be clear why he wants to speak. The kind of questions I have in mind are: 'Is the experience or idea I am about to share with my fellow worshippers such that it will contribute to the sensitivity of the life of the meeting and help it to reach an awareness of transcendence?'

Gorman, p. 107

Anything that smacks of self-advertisement, or axe-grinding, or is in the nature of useful information that we should like to let people know that we possess, should give rise in us to strong hesitations as to its suitability, to put it mildly.

Gorman, p. 108

IF A MESSAGE ARISES IN YOU WHICH IS ON A DIFFERENT THEME FROM THE PREVIOUS MINISTRY, WHAT DO YOU DO WITH IT? (It may be more compelling than those messages built on a theme?)
As thou beginnest with the Spirit, keep to it in thy going on and conclude in it, and this will preserve thee from tiring thy brethren, and causing them to wish for thy silence.
Samuel Bownas, quoted by Gorman on p. 109

Brevity, earnestness, sincerity - and frequently a lack of polish - characterize the best Quaker speaking.
*The Gathered Meeting*, Sect. III

... More meetings are harmed by too much speaking than by too little.
Gorman, p. 109

"Begin with, keep with and quit with the Life."
John Williams, quoted in *Friends for 300 Years*, p. 94

**WHAT IS IT WHICH TEMPTS SOME OF US TO SPEAK TOO LONG?**

**HOW CAN WE GUARD AGAINST THIS?**

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LEAVE SPACE AFTER EACH SPOKEN MESSAGE?**

...It seems right...to pay tribute to those faithful Friends who come regularly to meeting, but never speak. Yet they make a tremendous contribution to the silent worship by their deeply gathered stillness.
Gorman, p. 103

**WHAT SPECIAL QUALITY IS GORMAN TALKING ABOUT HERE?**

**WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU HEAR VOCAL MINISTRY WHICH IRRITATES YOU?**

...Ask yourself why his message is not reaching you, or is causing such a negative reaction.
Gorman, p. 14

**MINISTRY SOMETIMES MUST DISTURB. WHY?**

For utterances in meeting must, if they are to be sincere, express not only what is cheerful, comforting, beautiful and good in our experience, but also what is true, and while that can often be cheerful, it may equally well be uncomfortable as it shakes complacency and challenges us.
Gorman, p. 110

**WHAT ARE SOME OTHER WAYS TO HELP THE MEETING FOR WORSHIP?**

Two possible answers:
Attend regularly
Help to develop a sense of community in the Meeting
CAN YOU CITE TIMES WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN LED TO SOME ACTION AS A RESULT OF MEETING FOR WORSHIP?

It would be a tragic mistake to suppose that religion is only for a small group, who have certain vivid but transient inner experiences, and to preach those experiences so that those who are relatively insensitive to them should feel excluded, denied access to the Eternal love.... The crux of religious living lies in the will, not in transient and variable states. Utter dedication of will to God is open to all....

Kelly, The Gathered Meeting, Sect. IV

QUERY in Faith and Practice on Meeting for Worship and on Ministry, pp. 188 and 189.

(It might be helpful to ask at least those queries which were not covered in your discussion. Or you might use all of them for a period of reflection and closure.)
SESSION III - "WHEN TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME"

The basis upon which we hold our Meetings for Business—be they committee, Monthly, Quarterly, or Yearly Meetings—is that this is God's world, that He has unfinished business for us to do, and that it is possible for us to ascertain His will for us in this world.

Thomas S. Brown, *When Friends Attend to Business*

Recommended advance reading for participants:

*Guide to Quaker Practice* - pp. 30-36
*When Friends Attend to Business* by Thomas S. Brown, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting pamphlet, 1515 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102
*Faith and Practice* - pp. 17-18, 84-87, 123-126, 189

Supplementary Reading:

*Friends for 300 Years* - Chapter 6
*Christian Faith and Practice*, Sections 349-358

Other advance preparation by participants:

If timing is right, encourage participants to attend a meeting for business before this session.

Additional resources:

Ask the clerk and recording clerk of your meeting to be present.

Materials needed:

Chalkboard or newsprint, etc.
Group's list of basic beliefs from first session

**Introductions:**

If there are new people, this is still necessary.

**Discussion:**

SO THAT WE CAN KNOW WHAT OUR COMMON EXPERIENCE IS, HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE ATTENDED A FRIENDS MEETING FOR BUSINESS? HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE READ ABOUT IT?

(If only a few have attended a meeting for business, ask those who have to each state one impression or feeling about meeting for business - or to ask a question s/he might have.)
(Then ask those who have read about meeting for business:)

WHAT NEW THING HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR READING? or WHAT SURPRISED YOU ABOUT MEETING FOR BUSINESS?
(Refer the group to the list they made of beliefs that are basic to
Friends, and ask:)

OUT OF WHICH OF THESE BELIEFS DOES OUR FORM OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS GROW?

WHY IS THE BUSINESS MEETING CENTERED IN WORSHIP? WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THIS
SPIRIT OF WORSHIP MAKE?

WHY DON'T WE VOTE?

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FRIENDS' SENSE OF THE MEETING AND CONSENSUS
(e.g. of the League of Women Voters)? THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SENSE OF THE
MEETING AND COMPROMISE?

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF MAKING DECISIONS BY A SENSE OF THE MEETING?

WHAT ARE THE DIFFICULTIES? HOW DO WE DEAL WITH THESE?

WHO SHOULD COME TO MEETING FOR BUSINESS?

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS IN REGARD TO THE MEETING FOR
BUSINESS? (With the help of the group, list these on a board or newsprint.
Below are listed some responsibilities which, hopefully, would be included in
some form. If the group does not include some which you think are important,
ask a question which would lead people to think about that aspect of
responsibility.

Try to remain centered as in a meeting for worship.
Pray for guidance.
Remember the length of the agenda and help the Meeting to flow,
rather than get stuck in superficialities.
At the same time, help the group to take time to discuss fully
and thoughtfully important issues.
Be willing to face differences of opinion.
Listen carefully to all contributions. Be ready to change your
mind, as part of your endeavor to seek true guidance.
Be open to leadings for new responsibility.
If you have an opinion which has not been expressed, you have a
responsibility to state it if it seems important to you.
State your feelings in the meeting while the issue is being
considered, rather than be disgruntled and critical of the
meeting's decision after the meeting is over.)

Here is a caution from John Woolman:

Here I had occasion to consider that it is a weighty thing to
speak much in large meetings for business...
In three hundred minutes are five hours, and he that improperly
detains three hundred people one minute, besides other evils that
attend it, does an injury like that of imprisoning one man five
hours without cause.

Faith & Practice, pp. 85-86
WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ONE WHO STILL HAS A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION OR JUDGEMENT FROM MOST OF THE GROUP – EVEN AFTER STATING HIS/HER POSITION AND BEING HEARD BY THE MEETING? WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE CLERK?

HOW CAN YOU BE HELPFUL TO THE CLERK?

(Here is a quotation to read about a responsibility which your group might not think of:)

Let us remember continually in prayer the clerks at the table, whose duty it is to gather up the sense of the meeting and, with the guidance of God, to find the words in which to record a right decision. It is the privilege of all present to continue in an attitude of worship towards God, and of sympathetic fellowship with each other, until the business has been rightly dealt with. And those who are inevitably prevented from attending, may well turn in thought and prayer to the matters before the meeting, remembering that they too share responsibility for the promotion of the work of the Church.

Christian Faith and Practice, Sect. 353

REMEMBER: THE COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF FRIENDS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN THE SAME MANNER AS A BUSINESS MEETING OF THE MONTHLY, QUARTERLY AND YEARLY MEETINGS.

The Queries on P. 189 of Faith and Practice could be used for further discussion or a brief period of reflection.
The test for membership should not be doctrinal agreement, nor adherence to certain testimonies, but evidence of sincere seeking and striving for the Truth, together with an understanding of the lines along which Friends are seeking that Truth.

Friends World Conference, 1952

Recommended advance reading for participants:

- Guide to Quaker Practice – pp. 8-9, 25-30, 36-40
- Faith and Practice – pp 143-147, 150-159

Supplementary Reading

- Christian Faith and Practice – Sects. 357, 365-375

Materials Needed:

We suggest you photocopy the paragraphs on the next page from p. 8 of Guide to Quaker Practice and the one from p. 127 of Friends for 300 Years on membership, so that each participant has a copy.

Note to Leader(s):

We recommend that you cover the topics of Meeting structure and Quarterly and Yearly Meetings first and as quickly as possible so as to leave the main portion of your time for a discussion of membership. But the former topics do help fill out the context of membership, so they deserve some mention.

Discussion

Meeting Structure:

(Briefly describe the committees of your Meeting and their work.)

Quarterly and Yearly Meetings:

(We recommend that you simply and briefly describe the structure of your quarterly and yearly meeting. You need not go into much detail. Points which might be covered are:

- The Quarterly and Yearly meetings exist "to undertake such matters as cannot so well be undertaken by the smaller bodies." Guide to Quaker Practice, p. 29
- They do not have authority over Monthly Meetings, except in one or two technical areas.
- People who are appointed as representatives to Quarterly or Yearly Meetings have no more of a voice there than any other member who attends.
- "Membership in the Society of Friends exists only through membership in a particular Monthly Meeting" but "includes membership in the Quarterly Meeting and Yearly Meeting." Guide to Quaker Practice, p. 27
Tell when and where your Quarterly and Yearly Meetings meet. 
Mention your Quarterly Meeting staff, if any, and your Yearly Meeting staff. 
For PYM Friends, describe Friends Center, the Book Store, and the Library and its services. The YM Library mails out books on request. They can be mailed back at the low library rate.)

**Membership:**

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Ideally, membership is an outward sign of an inward experience of Christ, the "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). The Society should reach out and welcome all who find that its fundamental principles of belief and conduct meet their needs. 

*Faith and Practice*, p. 155

**HOW WELL DOES THIS STATEMENT REFLECT THE ACTUAL PRACTICE IN YOUR MEETING IN REGARD TO MEMBERSHIP? HOW WELL DOES IT REFLECT YOUR OWN FEELINGS?** (Note that Christ and Inward Light are almost synonymous in the above statement.)

**HERE ARE TWO STATEMENTS WHICH HOWARD BRINTON MAKES ABOUT MEMBERSHIP:**

... The Society of Friends accepts into membership a person who is willing to follow the Quaker method regardless of where it may lead.... The Quaker bases his method on belief in a God-centered spiritual universe, the inner truth and meaning of which is in some degree accessible to man. 

*Guide to Quaker Practice*, p. 8

As membership in the meeting is membership in a community, the test of membership is compatibility with the meeting community. Members are either born into the meeting or join it because they desire to fit into the pattern of behavior peculiar to the meeting and find themselves able to do so. The test of membership is not a particular kind of religious experience, nor acceptance of any particular religious, social or economic creed. Sincere religious experience and right religious belief are both important, but they develop in the course of participation in the activities of the meeting. Anyone who can become so integrated with a meeting that he helps the whole and the whole helps him is qualified to become a member.

*Friends for 300 Years*, p. 127

**HOW WELL DO THESE STATEMENTS COINCIDE WITH THE PRACTICE IN YOUR MEETING? WITH YOUR OWN FEELINGS?**

**WHAT, IF ANY, ARE THE CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP IN YOUR MEETING?**

**WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE SHOULD BE THE CRITERIA?**

**WHY SHOULD THERE BE ANY CRITERIA?**
HOW DO YOU DETERMINE IF A PERSON IS READY TO JOIN THE MEETING?

WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE ARE NO CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP?

"In 1776 the Society was united in refusing membership to persons who held slaves." (Friends for 300 Years, p. 107) DO YOU FEEL THAT THAT SEEMED JUSTIFIED? WHAT EQUIVALENT CIRCUMSTANCE TODAY, IF ANY, WOULD JUSTIFY REFUSAL OF MEMBERSHIP?

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MEMBERSHIP?

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS?
LESSON V - "DO UNTO OTHERS"

...be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come; that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one ...

George Fox, Journal Faith and Practice, p. 88

"The Quakers preached not only with their words but with their lives."

Faith and Practice, p. 2

Recommended advance reading for participants:


Supplementary reading:

Friends for 300 Years - pp. 118-129

Materials needed:

Diagram from p. 120 of Friends for 300 Years (reproduced at end of lesson) drawn on chalkboard or newsprint

Discussion

Introduction to Quaker Testimonies:

WHAT DOES THE WORD, "TESTIMONY", MEAN?

BUT AS SEEN IN THE ABOVE QUOTATIONS (Read them), QUAKER TESTIMONIES ARE MORE A MATTER OF ACTION THAN OF WORDS. OUT OF WHAT DO THE TESTIMONIES ARISE?

Activities of Friends on behalf of others have usually been motivated by a desire for clearness of conscience. A social condition becomes a matter of concern if it gives rise to a feeling of inward spiritual discomfort. Such concerns do not originate externally through human appointment, but inwardly through a feeling that God has laid a burden upon the bearer.

Guide to Quaker Practice, p. 56

...our standard of conduct does not consist of an outward set of rules. As Christians our standard is the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, not only as recorded in the New Testament, but also as revealed inwardly as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, seeking expression through our lives today.

Faith and Practice, p. 187

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT THE TESTIMONIES ARISE FROM THE LIGHT WITHIN?

(Refer to the diagram from Friends for 300 Years [which you have drawn on chalkboard or newsprint] as a way of showing how testimonies arise from the action of the light within. See diagram and explanation at end of lesson.)
GROWING IN THE LIGHT

WHY DON'T REASON AND AUTHORITY OFFER SUFFICIENT GUIDANCE?
(See Friends for 300 years, pp 120-121)

WE ARE GOING TO USE HOWARD BRINTON'S DESIGNATION OF QUAKER TESTIMONIES:
COMMUNITY, EQUALITY, HARMONY (PEACE), AND SIMPLICITY: BUT AS HE SAYS, "THESE
ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN AS ALL-INCLUSIVE."
(Friends for 300 Years, p. 119)

Community

Here are some ideas about community to share with the group:

The family is an important training ground. The Meeting can be, too. We
learn by living an ideal pattern. That kind of learning reaches down beyond
ideas to a deeper level of feelings which move the will.

Furthermore, it is easier to behave in a loving way in a congenial group
where beliefs are similar, than in the larger society.
(Gleaned from Friends for 300 Years, pp. 118-120

Parker Palmer's definition: Community is that place where the person you
don't want to live with lives.

HOW DO WE LIVE THE TESTIMONY OF COMMUNITY IN THE MEETING AND THE WIDER
COMMUNITY?

WHAT HELPS TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY? (Write responses on board or newsprint.)

WHY IS COMMUNITY IN THE MEETING IMPORTANT?

Community within the Meeting becomes manifest as an attempt of
the members to share with one another, spiritually, intellectually,
socially, and economically.

Guide to Quaker Practice, p. 57

HOW DO/CAN WE AS A MEETING SHARE: SPIRITUALLY? INTELLECTUALLY?
EMOTIONALLY? ECONOMICALLY?

No community develops the potential of its corporate life
unless the gifts of each of its members are evoked and exercised on
behalf of the whole community.

Eighth Day of Creation by Elizabeth O'Connor, p. 8

IN WHAT SPECIFIC WAYS CAN WE ENCOURAGE AND FOSTER ONE ANOTHER'S UNIQUE
GIFTS?

WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO DON'T LIVE UP TO QUAKERISM; WHAT SHOULD OUR ATTITUDE
AND ACTION BE TOWARD THEM?

IN WHAT WAYS ARE WE PREPARED TO SHARE SPIRITUALLY, INTELLECTUALLY,
EMOTIONALLY, ECONOMICALLY IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY?
For additional questions, see Queries in Faith and Practice under "Care for One Another" on p. 190 and "The Environment" on p. 193.

(Refer to this diagram from Friends for 300 Years as a way of showing how testimonies arise from the action of the Light within upon the Meeting.)

Light from God streams down into the waiting group. This light, if the way is open for it, produces three results: unity, knowledge and power.... Because of the characteristics of the Light of Christ, the resulting behavior can be described in a general way by the four words Community, Harmony, Equality and Simplicity, though these are not to be taken as all-inclusive....

Authority and reason are indispensable supplements to inward guidance. Their absence would indicate a state of ineptitude. But by themselves they are not enough.

Friends for 300 Years, pp. 119-121
SESSION VI - "IN HIS IMAGE..."  

Enunciation of the principle of equality among human beings in the sight of God is important and necessary, but it is not sufficient. Realization of equality involves such matters as independence and control of one's own life. Therefore, Friends must aid the efforts of the exploited to attain self-determination and social, political and economic justice, even when their attainment involves changes in attitudes and practices formerly taken for granted.  

_Faith and Practice_, p. 33

Recommended advance reading for participants:

_Guide to Quaker Practice_ - pp. 61-62  
_Faith and Practice_ - last paragraph on p. 3; "Human Brotherhood" on pp. 32-34; 1st 2 paragraphs of IV on pp. 201-202.

Supplementary Reading:

_Friends for 300 Years_ - pp. 131-134  
_Christian Faith and Practice_, Sects. 648-658

Materials needed:

List of basic beliefs from first session

Other Resources:

For up-to-date queries: "Racial Concerns Queries" - One small page prepared at the 15th Triennial Meeting (1982), free from Friends World Committee for Consultation, 1506 Race St., Philadelphia, PA, 19102.

Discussion

_IN WHAT SENSE DO WE CONSIDER EVERYONE EQUAL?_

_IN FAIRY TALES, IT IS OFTEN THE YOUNGEST CHILD OR THE GRUBBY LITTLE OLD MAN OR THE STRANGE-LOOKING ELF WHO HOLDS THE SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE, SOME ULTIMATE WISDOM. WHAT DOES THIS SYMBOLIZE?_

_OUT OF WHICH BELIEF(S) DID THE TESTIMONY OF EQUALITY ARISE?_

 WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT REFUSING HAT HONOR (TIPPING ONE'S HAT TO A "SUPERIOR") WAS IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO EARLY QUAKERS TO GO TO JAIL FOR IT AND TO REMAIN IN JAIL FOR LONG PERIODS?_

_ARE THERE ANY WAYS IN WHICH EQUALITY IS NOT BEING PRACTICED IN YOUR MEETING? IF SO, IN WHAT WAYS? WHAT COULD YOU DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?_

_WHAT EFFORTS DO YOU MAKE TO WELCOME INTO YOUR MEETING AND TO MAKE EASY PERSONS OF OTHER CULTURES AND COLOR?_

_WHAT ARE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT ALWAYS TREATED AS EQUAL IN OUR SOCIETY TODAY? WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT IT?_
Further questions adapted from the Queries on pp. 192-194 of *Faith and Practice*:

**DO YOU SEEK TO RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT THE DIVINE IN THOSE WITH WHOM YOU MAY HAVE BASIC DIFFERENCES?**

**ARE THE SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS AND BOARDING HOMES UNDER YOUR CARE, AND IS YOUR MEETING ITSELF, FREE FROM PRACTICES INVOLVING DISCRIMINATION?**

**WHAT ACTION IS YOUR MEETING TAKING TO HELP ASSURE MEMBERS OF MINORITIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS AND THE PROFESSIONS?**

**HOW DOES YOUR MEETING WORK TO OVERCOME SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INJUSTICES IN YOUR COMMUNITY AS WELL AS IN THE STATE AND NATION?**

**WHAT ELSE ARE YOU DOING AS A MEETING TO HELP REMEDY THE CONSEQUENCES OF RACIAL INJUSTICE?**

**HOW ARE YOU HELPING TO DEVELOP A SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SYSTEM WHICH WILL SO FUNCTION AS TO SUSTAIN AND ENRICH LIFE FOR ALL?**

**DO YOU ACTIVELY SUPPORT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL IN THE BUSINESS, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH WHICH YOU COME IN CONTACT?**

**IN ALL YOUR RELATIONS WITH OTHERS, DO YOU TREAT THEM AS EQUALS? WITH WHOM DO YOU FIND THIS DIFFICULT?**

**DO YOU ENDEAVOR TO CLEANSE YOURSELF OF EVERY VESTIGE OF PREJUDICE, AND FIRMLY BUT LOVINGLY OPPOSE IT IN YOUR HOME, AMONG YOUR FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES, AND IN BUSINESS? COULD YOU SHARE ONE EXAMPLE OF HOW YOU HAVE DONE OR COULD DO THIS?**

**ARE YOU OPEN TO PERSONAL FRIENDSHIPS WITH INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF MINORITY GROUPS? WITH MEMBERS OF WHAT GROUP WOULD YOU FIND THIS MOST DIFFICULT?**
SESSION VII: "THE WORLD IN TUNE"  THE TESTIMONIES - #3 - HARMONY

We shall believe that...peace on earth is possible to men of goodwill, and that the individual and the group may mutually assist each other to their highest self-realisation.

Henry J. Cadbury, 1937
Christian Faith and Practice, #589

(This session on harmony dwells much more on the roots of peace than on the social action for it. Such outer work is discussed in many places among Friends in these times. Therefore, I chose to concentrate on the inner work of peace - feeling that this is what you might need help in examining.

There is much more material in this lesson than you can use in one session. The material is here for your own background and reflection. Pick from it what seems most vital to you and the needs of your class. Do not succumb to the temptation to cram too much into one hour. Of course, an option would be to have more than one session on this timely and important topic.)

Recommended advance reading for participants:

Guide to Quaker Practice - pp. 58-60
Faith and Practice - pp. 34-36, 89-92, 193-194, 202

Supplementary Reading:

Peace Be with You: A Study of the Spiritual Basis of the Friends Peace Testimony by Sandra Cronk, published by The Tract Association of Friends, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA., 19102
Friends for 300 Years - pp. 130-131
Christian Faith and Practice - Sections 589, 605-647

Other Resources:

Peace Education Resource Center of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Library

Materials needed:

Group's list of basic beliefs from first session.

Discussion

Harmony is used here instead of pacifism, the latter word having come to mean, for many persons, simply an unwillingness to take part in war.... The word harmony is used here to designate the function which any part exerts in an integrated whole. This function is such that no part of the social organism imposes violence on any other part, but all work together in harmony. Those who hold the peace testimony seek to reconcile all individuals to one another so that a society will exist in which cooperation supplants conflict.

Guide to Quaker Practice, pp. 58-59
The melodic image is useful. It suggests that the sort of agreement found in Quaker decisions is not an identity of view such that every participant ends up on the same note. Instead, they remain on different notes but blend them as the pianist blends complementary notes into a chord.

Michael Sheeran, Beyond Majority Rule, pp. 63-64

FROM WHAT BASIC BELIEF DOES THE TESTIMONY OF HARMONY--OR THE PEACE TESTIMONY--COME?

Quakers cannot engage in war as a method of settling international disputes, for war is a test of strength, not a search for truth and justice.... Only spiritual means can achieve a spiritual end.

A Guide to Quaker Practice, p. 59

The earliest public Quaker document of the peace testimony, a letter to King Charles II in 1660:

We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; this is our testimony to the whole world.... The Spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil, and again to move unto it; and we certainly know, and testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ, which leads us into all truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdoms of this world.... Therefore, we cannot learn war any more.

Faith and Practice, p. 34; also pp. 89-90

The response of George Fox when, in 1651, he was asked to accept a position as an officer in the militia:

I told them I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars and I knew from whence all wars did rise, from the lust according to James's doctrine.... I told them I was come into the covenant of peace which was before wars and Strifes were.

The Journal of George Fox, ed. by Nickalls, p. 65

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LIVE "IN THE VIRTUE OF THAT LIFE AND POWER THAT TOOK AWAY THE OCCASION OF ALL WARS"?

HOW CAN WE DO THE SAME?

The root of this peace testimony is deep. It draws its nourishment from the power of God to bring transformation and healing into our inverted and wounded lives, from our deepening experience of Christ's love, and from our willingness to yield our lives to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Only as this testimony remains rooted deep in its nourishing soil is it able to produce fruit.

Peace Be with You, p. 3
WHY IS THIS DEEP ROOTEDNESS SO IMPORTANT?

WHAT PART CAN WE PLAY IN DEVELOPING THIS DEEP ROOTEDNESS IN OURSELVES?

Peace is possible now in the midst of the tumult and strife, as we become part of the active love Christ showers on the world....

This understanding of the peaceable kingdom as already present (at least as a seed) takes the wrongly-held burden of accomplishing peace off our shoulders. For we do not create the peaceable kingdom with our power. We enter into God's kingdom which is emerging in our midst. With this understanding, despair cannot overwhelm us. Hate can never extinguish the love of Christ.

Peace Be With You, pp. 14-15

HOW DO WE WORK FOR PEACE WITHOUT SHOULDERING THE BURDEN? CAN ANY OF YOU SHARE HOW YOU HAVE MANAGED TO DO THIS?

...This peace is not a possession which we receive once and for all and can tuck away as a mark of our religious accomplishment, making us superior to those who are not "at peace".... Our lives as peacemakers are rooted in a life of contemplation, a constant, living awareness of our relationship with God....

Peace is a gift, but it does not come magically through our passivity. Only in our faithful response to God's call do we receive God's peace.

Peace Be With You, pp. 15-16

HOW DO WE HEAR GOD'S CALL IN ORDER TO RESPOND?

Our peacemaking cannot wait until we feel completely loving.... We are called to obedient love even though we may not be feeling very loving.

Peace Be With You, p. 16

HOW DO WE MANAGE THAT?

HERE IS SOMETHING MORE SPECIFIC WHICH SANDRA CRONK TELLS US WE CAN DO:

We may be led by word and deed to speak a challenge to those who follow the path of violence and hatred. We may become witnesses of the love and power of God to bring new life. We may find concrete ways to help individuals and even nations to walk in the path of peace.

Peace Be With You, p. 16-17

WHAT EXPERIENCE CAN YOU SHARE OF YOUR OWN EFFORTS ALONG THESE LINES?
HERE IS AN IMPORTANT REMINDER FROM SANDRA:

Such witness requires knowledge of the specific causes of injustice and war in our contemporary society. We need to be informed about the workings of the social, economic, and political structures which govern so much of our lives. Discipleship is informed obedience, not naive or ignorant action.

Peace Be With You, p. 17

JOHN WOOLMAN SAID, "MAY WE LOOK UPON OUR TREASURES, THE FURNITURE OF OUR HOUSES, AND OUR GARMENTS, AND TRY WHETHER THE SEEDS OF WAR HAVE NOURISHMENT IN THESE OUR POSSESSIONS." (Faith and Practice, p. 90) WHAT IS THE POSSIBLE CONNECTION BETWEEN OUR POSSESSIONS AND THE SEEDS OF WAR?

WHAT CAN WE DO TO SEVER THIS CONNECTION?

'You have learned that they were told, "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth." But what I tell you is this: Do not set yourself against the man who wrongs you. If someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn and offer him your left. If a man wants to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well. If a man in authority makes you go one mile, go with him two. Give when you are asked to give; and do not turn your back on a man who wants to borrow.'

Matthew 5:38-42 NEB

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU RESPOND TO INJURY OR COERCION WITH RETALIATION AND VIOLENCE?

WHAT CLUES DOES THE ABOVE BIBLE PASSAGE GIVE YOU AS TO HOW TO BREAK THE CHAIN OF VIOLENCE?

(You can use two people to demonstrate a principle of turning the other cheek. Have a right-handed person act out striking another person on the right cheek. You will find that this is an awkward move unless he/she strikes with the back of the hand. In Jesus' day the back of the hand would be what a person would strike an inferior with; never would the palm be used. Now, have the same person strike the other on the left cheek. Here you will find that it is very awkward to do it with the back of the hand. Thus by turning the left cheek to a right-handed person you would be inviting that person to strike you as an equal. In doing this you would be taking the initiative and catching the person off guard or bringing in an element of surprise.)

THE THREE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE VERSES ABOVE ARE NOT RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE A DOORMAT, BUT ARE WAYS TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN RECONCILIATION OR AT LEAST A NEW FORM OF RELATIONSHIP; THEY ARE NOT ASKING YOU TO BE THE UNWILLING VICTIM, BUT THE WILLING ABSORBER AND TRANSFORMER OF EVIL.

'You have learned that they were told, "Love your neighbour, hate your enemy." But what I tell you is this: Love your enemies and pray for your persecutors; only so can you be children of your heavenly Father, who makes his sun rise on good and bad alike, and sends the rain on the honest and the dishonest.... There must be no limit to your goodness, as your heavenly Father's goodness knows no bounds.'

Matthew 5:43-48 NEB
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY FOR YOUR PERSECUTORS?

BUT LOVING YOUR ENEMIES IS NOT EASY. WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO HELP YOURSELF DO THIS?

(An optional exercise you can have the group try is to have each person think of an "enemy" or at least someone who is irritating and then list on a piece of paper the qualities in that "enemy" which are personally irritating. Then have each person look at the qualities he/she has listed for the enemy and see how many of these are found in himself or herself. Usually, many of the qualities which bother you in another person can be found, if you are honest, in yourself. Thus, our enemies are a good clue as to the qualities we need to recognize and deal with in ourselves. — Exercise from Walter Wink, Transforming Bible Study, pp. 134-135.)

SINCE IT WOULD HELP US TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES IF WE WERE MORE ABLE TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND LOVE OUR TOTAL SELVES, HOW CAN WE COME TO DO THIS WITHOUT GIVING IN TO OUR UNDESIRABLE QUALITIES?

WE ARE OFTEN TEMPTED TO SACRIFICE HONESTY IN RELATIONSHIPS FOR A SUPERFICIAL OR OUTER HARMONY. HERE IS A QUOTATION WHICH WILL GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT HERE:

So often we find it easier to take our grievance to a third party, which is really no more than the beginning of gossip. We need to remind ourselves that true love consists of more than a continual feeling of well-being. True love does not, and should not, always agree. Friends are so anxious to support one another that they are often hesitant to reprove one another for fear of shattering social harmony. Yet, as John Woolman wrote, "To see the failings of our friends, and think hard of them, without opening that which we ought to open, and still carry a face of friendship, tends to undermine the foundations of true unity."

Chip Poston, "The Sharpness of Love"

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE WHEN TRUE FEELINGS HAVE BEEN COVERED OVER IN A FRIENDS MEETING OR OTHER GROUP FOR THE SAKE OF OUTER HARMONY?

Participation in the church community does not mean that we must all be able to love so perfectly that we never get angry and we never cause hurt. Rather, being part of the Meeting means that we are willing to take on the discipline of learning to love. And one of the basic aspects of that discipline is learning to forgive and be forgiven. In forgiveness is the seed of the peaceable kingdom.

Peace Be With You, p. 27

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DO NOT FORGIVE? TO US? TO THE ONE NOT FORGIVEN? TO THE RELATIONSHIP?
WHAT ARE THE STEPS YOU GO THROUGH IN FORGIVING SOMEONE?

Some questions to reflect on in small groups:

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU FEEL THAT YOU CAN DO OR ARE DOING TOWARD PEACE IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY?

WHAT IS HOLDING YOU BACK FROM FOLLOWING YOUR LEADINGS RE PEACE?

HOW CAN THE MEETING COMMUNITY HELP YOU TO FIND A WAY THROUGH THIS BARRIER?

WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP IN THIS AREA?
The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.
Matthew 6:22

No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on.... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.
Matthew 6:24-33

Recommended advance reading for participants:

Guide to Quaker Practice - pp. 62-64
Faith and Practice - "Committees of the Meeting" and "Simplicity and Integrity" on pp. 18-20; 100-103; 195

Supplementary Reading:

Friends for 300 Years - pp. 134-143
Christian Faith and Practice - Sections 433-436, 458

Materials needed:

List of basic beliefs from first session

Discussion:

WHAT ARE THE ASPECTS OF THE TESTIMONY OF SIMPLICITY?

(Possible responses: simple - uncomplicated - the absence of all that is unnecessary - singleness of purpose - integrity, i.e., no duplicity)

WHY IS SIMPLICITY IMPORTANT TO FRIENDS? (Might list reasons)

CAN YOU FIND ANY BASIC BELIEF(S) OUT OF WHICH THIS TESTIMONY AROSE?

A life centered in God will be characterized by integrity, sincerity and simplicity. It need not be cloistered and may even be a busy life, but its activities and expressions should be correlated and directed toward the simple, direct purpose of keeping one's communication with God open and unencumbered by that which is unessential.
Simplicity does not mean that all conform to uniform standards. Each must determine in the light that is given him what promotes and what hinders his compelling search for the Kingdom. The call to each is to abandon those things that clutter his life and to press toward the goal unhampered. This is true simplicity.

*Christian Faith and Practice*, #434

**WHAT IN YOUR LIFE INTERFERES WITH COMMUNICATION WITH GOD? WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM BEING CENTERED? FROM PAYING ATTENTION TO THE INWARD LIGHT?**

**WHAT INTERFERES WITH PERIODS OF SILENCE? WHY HAVE SILENCE?**

**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE REASONS FOR OUR HAVING SUCH A SIMPLE FORM OF WORSHIP?**

**HOW WELL DO WE KEEP TO SIMPLE SPEECH IN MEETING FOR WORSHIP? IN CONVERSATION?**

**WILLIAM PENN ONCE SAID: "THE VERY TRIMMING OF THE VAIN WORLD WOULD CLOTHE ALL THE NAKED ONE." HOW TRUE IS THIS TODAY? HOW DOES THIS SPEAK TO OUR LIFE?**

**HOW CAN WE BE MORE AWARE OF THIS AS A MEETING?**

**JOHN WOOLMAN CUT BACK HIS BUSINESS SO THAT IT WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH HIS RELIGIOUS LIFE. IN WHAT WAY DOES OUR LACK OF SIMPLICITY INTERFERE WITH OUR SERVICE TO THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS?**

The testimony of simplicity needs to be applied to our use of time. Thomas Kelly writes in *A Testament of Devotion*:

> I wish I might emphasize how a life becomes simplified when dominated by faithfulness to a few concerns. Too many of us have too many irons in the fire. We get distracted by the intellectual claim to our interest in a thousand and one good things, and before we know it we are pulled and hauled breathlessly along by an overburdened program of good committees and good undertakings. I am persuaded that this fevered life of church workers is not wholesome ...

Faith and Practice, p. 101

Or *A Testament of Devotion*, p. 110 for full text

**WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND TO DO ABOUT THIS PROBLEM IN YOUR LIVES?**

**HOW DO WE BALANCE SIMPLICITY IN THIS SENSE AND TAKING OUR SHARE OF THE RESPONSIBILITY?**

**HOW CAN WE AS A MEETING HELP PEOPLE CARRY A REASONABLE, NOT OVERBURDENED, SHARE OF THE MEETING RESPONSIBILITIES?**

**WHY DO FRIENDS RESIST OATH TAKING?**

Because simplicity also means integrity and sincerity, the stand on judicial oaths comes under simplicity. No testimony resulted in more suffering for Quakers. Many endured long, difficult imprisonments because of their refusal to take judicial oaths. There were two reasons for their stand:
1) Oaths were against the command of Jesus (Matt. 5:34); 2) they set up a double standard for truth. William Penn said in *A Treatise on Oaths*, "People swear to the end they may speak truth; Christ would have them speak truth to the end they might not swear."

You may wish to use the Queries on Simplicity, p. 195 of *Faith and Practice*, for reflection or further discussion.
A PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE TESTIMONIES

What
For the final session, arrange a panel discussion as described below. If you have been meeting in two adult groups for Lessons V-VIII, bring everyone together for this week. Omit the intergenerational opening time since the panel will take at least a full hour.

How
Ask four Friends from your Meeting to speak briefly (5 minutes each) on their experiences in trying to put the testimonies into practice. Find someone who can speak specifically about each testimony. For example, at one Meeting, the speakers were: for community a man who had worked in community dispute settlement; for equality a couple who had done prison visiting; for harmony a woman who was a pacifist in England during World War II; and for simplicity a couple who had made a number of conscious steps to simplify their lives (e.g. no TV, used clothing, and so on.) Try to find people in your own Meeting for the panel. Seeing how people right around us are struggling with the testimonies is more effective than hearing from distant and/or well-known Quaker activists.

After all four have spoken, moderate a discussion which focuses on the hows of putting faith into practice. It may be advisable to allow two weeks for this discussion with the second week centering on each person preparing a personal program which translates the testimonies into action for him/herself.

End with silence. A time for all to reflect on this and the previous lessons.
GROWING IN THE LIGHT

PARENT SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE: LESSONS V - VIII

For Lessons V - VIII, this curriculum includes two sets of adult lessons per week. One set deals with practicing the testimonies in the Meeting and the wider community; the other with living the testimonies in the home. The sessions on Living the Testimonies in the Home are structured as parent-support groups; they are written for groups of parents who want to try to put faith into action at home. General Guidelines for the Parent-Support Groups are:

1. For each week there is a list of questions. Participants in your group should have these questions in hand.

2. Use the "Creative Listening" and/or worship-sharing techniques. Creative listening allows each person to speak to an issue or question without fear of an argumentative response. Worship-sharing is a good way to close a session; participants are invited to respond out of worshipful silence to the issues raised. A good pattern is creative listening to introduce an issue followed by open discussion and finally worship-sharing. If there is not time for worship-sharing, at least close with some silence. If you need more background on Creative Listening and Worship Sharing, the PYM Religious Education Office has a packet available on this topic ($2.00 + .75 postage; 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19102)

3. The leader should read pp. 55-64 in Guide to Quaker Practice and Chapter 7 in Friends for 300 Years. Participants should also read pp. 55-64 in the Guide to Quaker Practice.

4. The Sermon on the Mount provides scriptural support for each of the testimonies (Matthew 5-7; Luke 6:20-49)

5. A group size of 10-20 is assumed. If you have adequate leadership, it is best to keep the groups no larger than 12 each.

6. The leader's role is important. He/she must keep the group on track, explain group process techniques such as creative listening, and be prepared with background material on each testimony. Especially important is emphasis on evaluating one's own home life, not on convincing others to follow a particular lifestyle.


8. Each week ask participants to try to make one conscious step toward living that week's testimony in their homes. The following week spend some time discussing the success or failure of these efforts. This idea helps people get beyond talk to action.
LESSON V "DO UNTO OTHERS"

I Issues
A. Community in the home
B. The relationship of the community in the family to the world at large, including the Meeting.

II Questions – Do A & B first, being sure everyone responds, then choose among the other questions for discussion.
A. What does the word "testimony" mean?
B. What are the requirements for community? Make a list of those requirements.
C. How do we build community in the home?
D. What are the problems we encounter as we try to build a "family community"?
E. How do we relate our small family community to the world at large?
F. How can our Meeting help us develop a sense of community?

III Quotations and Thoughts
A. "So always treat others as you would like them to treat you..."
   Matt. 7:12
B. "All friends mind that which is Eternal, which gathers your hearts up together to the Lord and lets you see that ye are written in one another's Heart." George Fox
C. "Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity"
   Psalm 133:1
D. "In every path of timber you
   Will always find a tree or two
   That would have fallen long ago
   Borne down by wind or snow,
   Had not another neighbor tree
   Held out its arms in sympathy
   And caught the tree the storm had hurled
   (sister)
   To earth. So, brother, is the world.
   (we)
   God grant that men are like these,
   (sisters)
   And brothers, brotherly as trees."
   from Canadian Lumberman
E. Community requires:
   Tolerance ... Responsibility ... Love
   A feeling of being needed and appreciated
   Loyalty, Respect, Listening, Being attuned to others
   A sense of permanence and belonging
   Generosity of self ... Selflessness ... Trust
   Equality ... Mutual Support ... Empathy ... Recognition of our own fallibility ... the ability to be sorry and to forgive

IV. Notes on this session
A. Spend some introductory time on why the group wants to discuss the testimonies.
B. Reading and responding to the quotations is an alternative way to begin.
C. Use those questions that your group finds important. Don't try to cover all of them, but do try to address those which raise real personal issues such as the conflict between individual and communal needs.
GROWING IN THE LIGHT
PARENT SUPPORT SESSION

LESSON VI - "IN HIS IMAGE"  TESTIMONIES #2 - EQUALITY

I. Issues
   A. Equality among family members
   B. The equal worth of all people in the sight of God.

II. Questions
   A. What do we mean by equality?
   B. What kinds of distinctions among people are invalid?
   C. What distinctions are valid?
   D. How are family members equal? How do we demonstrate our belief in this equality?
   E. How are family members unequal? How do we handle these inequalities?
   F. What do we do that teaches our children to see all people as equal in the sight of God?
   G. How do we deal with prejudices that our children bring home?
   H. What do we do that teaches prejudice?
   I. How does the way we treat our children affect the way they treat others?

III. Quotations
   A. "The man who knoweth God looketh on all men as equal as the wind bloweth on the rich and poor alike" (Sikh saying)
   B. "The goal of good human relations is a community in which each individual and each group can feel sure of opportunities for self development, full realization of potential and rewarding relations with others." Philadelphia Faith and Practice, p. 34
   C. "In a real sense all life is interrelated. The agony of the poor impoverishes the rich; the betterment of the poor enriches the rich. We are inevitably our brother's keeper because we are our brother's brother. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly" Martin Luther King.
   D. "We hold these truths to be self-evident - that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Declaration of Independence

IV. Notes on this Session
   A. The story of John Woolman and the robin from his Journal (Chapter 1) is a good beginning, as an example of an early Friend's concern for all life and also of the possibility for moral instruction in childhood. Since Woolman's concern grew into his great testimony against slavery, this is a particularly effective story.
   B. The Golden Rule and the section on judgement from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:1-5) as well as several sections in London's Christian Faith and Practice (654 and 657), and Philadelphia Faith and Practice (pp. 93-94) may also help as discussion starters.
   C. Two areas which are of concern to parents are the subtle ways we pass our prejudices on to our children and the difficulty of seeing people's commonality without belittling their differences.
III. Quotations and Thoughts
A. "Peace grows out of love and trust and generosity and goodwill and if these are not part of our individual daily lives we can hardly expect peace in our time." Frederick Tolles
B. "Our peace testimony is our way of living in this world, of looking at this world and of changing this world." Friends World Conference, 1952
C. "Let us see what Love will do." William Penn
D. "We learn to love mankind by learning to love some person." Kermit Eby
E. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God." I John 4:7
F. "Whencesoever such a thing [the peaceable kingdom] shall be brought forth in the world it must have a beginning before it can grow and be perfected ... therefore whoever desires to see this lovely state brought forth in the general ... must cherish it in the particular." Isaac Penington
G. Requirements for harmony: forgiveness, equilibrium, talking, doing, respect, trust, values, time, honesty, admitting errors, and arbitration.

IV. Notes on this session
A. Your introduction can include reference to the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5: 38-118) as well as several selections from London's Faith and Practice, (e.g. 30 and 40). Emphasize the need to find internal harmony and harmony in our homes before we seek to bring harmony to the world at large. You may want to list the requirements of harmony.
B. Have each person give an example of harmony and disharmony in his/her own home.
C. Discipline and authority are especially potent issues for Quakers.
LESSON VIII - "'TIS THE GIFT TO BE SIMPLE"  TESTIMONIES #4 - SIMPLICITY

I. Issues
   A. Living simply in the face of modern complexity
   B. Simplicity as an external act and simplicity as an internal state

II. Questions - Before asking the questions, read the following section from Faith and Practice:

   A life centered in God will be characterized by integrity, sincerity and simplicity. It need not be cloistered and may even be a busy life, but its activities and expressions should be correlated and directed toward the simple, direct purpose of keeping one's communication with God open and unencumbered by that which is unessential. Simplicity is best approached through a right ordering of priorities.

   Simplicity consists not in the use of particular forms but in avoiding self-indulgence, in maintaining humility of spirit and in keeping the material surroundings of our lives directly serviceable to necessary ends. This does not mean that life need be poor and bare or destitute of joy and beauty. All forms of art may aid in the attainment of the spiritual life, and often the most simple lines, themes or moments, when characterized by grace and directness, are the most beautiful.

   P. 19

   A. What does simplicity mean to you? Why is it important?
   B. Traditionally Friends have spoken of simplicity of dress, speech, and behavior. How do you understand these areas of simplicity? What other kinds of simplicity are there?
   C. What are the enemies of simplicity in the home?
   D. What can we do to promote simplicity in our home life?
   E. Are there ways to make space for the inner lives of family members?

III. Quotations
   A. "But perhaps most will be called to the humdrum tasks of serving an employer well, or running a house, bringing up a family, keeping the peace with neighbors, serving the community in little things - the tasks which, because they are simple, are in fact most difficult to do with dedication ... Our duty is to be sensitive to what God is asking us to do, and not to dissipate our energies trying to be absolutists in several directions at once." New England Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice
   B. "The heart of Christian simplicity lies in the singleness of purpose which is required by the injunction to seek first the Kingdom of God. As men seek to express the spirit of God in their daily lives, they realize the necessity of putting first things first." Philadelphia Faith and Practice
   C. "When true simplicity is gained, To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed" Joseph Bracket
   D. "The call to each is to abandon those things that clutter his life and to press toward the goal unhampered." Philadelphia Faith and Practice
E. "My mind through the power of Truth was in a good degree weaned from the desire of outward greatness, and I was learning to be content with real conveniences that were not costly; so that a way of life free from much Entanglements, appeared best to me, tho' the income was small." John Woolman

IV Notes on this session
A. Begin with the "Lilies of the fields" passage from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:25-34). Important issues for this discussion are integrity, sincerity, and avoidance of superfluity. Contrast early Friends' practice of simplicity in dress and speech with expressions of simplicity appropriate to our times. Emphasize that simplicity is not the absence of joy or beauty but the presence of order, honesty and measuredness.

B. Have each group member define simplicity. Priorities, use of time, perspective on what is important, and materialism are areas which may arise. You may also want to list the enemies of simplicity, such as TV, cars, peers, drugs and alcohol, commercialism and busy schedules.

C. A passage from Pierre Ceresole (London, Faith and Practice, #103) which sums up many concerns about living a Quaker life makes a good ending to these sessions. Read it and then close with a worship-sharing session: "It is in fact, life itself, ordinary life as it is called (and the more ordinary the more harmonious it is) which is our essential and constant communion with God ..."