

# Epistle 312

by George Fox

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*George Fox's Epistle 312 emphasizes the importance of the Spirit in worship, prayer, and maintaining unity among believers.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:6, John 14:13, Romans 10:15, 1 Corinthians 14:15, 2 Corinthians 3:6, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 4:3, Philippians 4:7, Hebrews 4:16, Revelation 14:6

**Topics:** "True Worship", "Unity in the Spirit"

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## Description

George Fox emphasizes the necessity of being in the power and spirit of God for true prayer, singing, and ministry. He explains that genuine spiritual experiences bring joy and unity among believers, and that those who minister in the spirit cannot judge others who express their joy and praise in response. Fox warns against the spirit of error that leads to confusion and disorder, urging all to remain humble and united in the spirit of God. He highlights the importance of intercession and the collective prayer of the assembly, which should be done in sincerity and integrity. Ultimately, he calls for maintaining peace and order within the church as a reflection of Christ's peace.

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## Transcript

All Friends that are in the power of God, and in his spirit; through this spirit you pray unto God, and ask in the name of Christ Jesus [John 14:13f], (which all true prayers are to be in,) and the true singing and rejoicing are to be in the spirit, and the true preaching and ministry are to be in the spirit [1 Cor 14:15]; for the saints were made able ministers of the spirit, and not of the letter [2 Cor 3:6].

Now when a minister, in the spirit of the living God [2 Cor 3:3], does minister spiritual and heavenly things, they that receive them, receive them with joy in the assembly; now he that is a minister of the spirit, and ministers spiritual things, if they that receive them, receive them in sincerity, with joy and gladness, and rejoice in the receiving of them, whilst the other is ministering them, he that is a minister of the spirit, does not judge such; but rejoices in them that do receive them, and praises God for the same.

And so likewise they that do sing in the spirit do reach to the spirit in others, whereby they have a sense that it proceedeth from the spirit; for at the hearing of the speech of the true minister, there is joy to all that seek and thirst after righteousness [Mat 5:6]; for the preaching the gospel is the glad-tidings [Rom 10:15], the joyful news, and is a comfort both to soul, body, and spirit, to all that receive it in integrity and sincerity, and they cannot but rejoice at the sound of the power, where it is received; and they that preach in this cannot judge such as rejoice in the spirit and power, and in their souls praise God when they hear the

sound of it.

Oh! the everlasting gospel [Rev 14:6], the everlasting power of God, which is liberty, where this is heard (the sound of it,) which is the liberty to the spirit, to the soul, to the creature; if a creature should praise God in his soul, in his spirit, in the very hearing of the sound of this glorious gospel [2 Cor 4:4, 1 Tim 1:11], or make a joyful melody [Isa 51:3?]; the minister of the spirit, who preaches the glorious gospel, cannot judge such for that, and say it is a confused noise [Isa 9:5]; for that is the minister of the letter that so judges, who may gather up parcels of the letter, and make a song of that, or preachment of that, to which the gospel ministry of the spirit is the savour of death unto death, and of life unto life [2 Cor 2:16].

And concerning praying in the spirit; which 'spirit makes intercession to God, with sighs and groans that cannot be uttered [Rom 8:26].' Now where this spirit is prayed in, (which all true prayer is to be in,) it makes intercession through the veils [Heb 10:20-22?], through the clouds and thick darkness [Deut 4:11?], by the invisible power, to the invisible God [Col 1:15]; and this prayer being made in an assembly to the throne of grace [Heb 4:16], there the assembly (in their spirits) join in this spirit, and do make intercession, and do enter through the veils [Heb 10:20-22?], clouds, and thick darkness [Deut 4:11f] to the throne of grace.

And if some of these should praise God in a joyful sound [Psa 89:15] with their souls and spirits, can he that prays in the spirit, and makes intercession therein, judge them that groan in the spirit, and feel the intercession to the throne of grace? No, he cannot; for he feels a unity in the spirit; and in case that some do groan and sigh, when another is praying in the spirit, that makes the intercession easy in the invisible spirit, to the invisible God, and throne of his grace; which the spirit of God operating in the assembly, makes some to sigh and groan, being sensible of their wants; and the power has awakened such; therefore can any judge such that pray in the power and spirit, that has awakened them?

Nay, but hears them, and is glad where it stirs; and so having the mind of the Lord [1 Cor 2:16], and makes intercession to him by his spirit, who hears the sighs of the needy [Psa 12:5], and groans of the oppressed [Judg 2:18], he cannot judge such. And therefore they that do judge such sighers, prayers, and such who make a joyful melody, (from the word dwelling in their hearts [Isa 53:1/Eph 5:19/Deut 30:14],) they who judge such, are not in the spirit that makes intercession; and that which is contrary is to be reprov'd and admonish'd in private, by them that are in the spirit of God, lest they pluck up the wheat and tares together [Mat 13:29], and make a confusion in the church; for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace [1 Cor 14:33] and good order.

But that spirit which is high and lofty, and can form a praise by words, and pray in his own spirit, will judge such sighing, groaning, praising, and singing, as before; but that exalted spirit is to be cut down with the sword of the spirit [Eph 6:17]. For if any should sigh, or groan, or rejoice, or make a joyful sound, when another is praying in the spirit of God, and ministering in the spirit, spiritual things; this the spirit of error [1 Jn 4:6] cannot bear, but swells, and breaks out into confusion and disorder, which, (as I said before,) is to be cut down with the sword of the spirit; for he denies the effect of true prayer, and the spirit of prayer, which makes intercession, who hath, or would have, no feeling of the effects of true prayer; but that which is formal, and in the imitation, that makes many to groan and sigh, who are burdened with that spirit; yea, many tender ones.

And therefore all are to keep low before the Lord, in the humility, in the spirit and power; out of the imagination, imitation, and self-exaltation. And so keep in the unity of the spirit, which is the bond of peace

[Eph 4:3]; yea , the bond of the Prince of princes' peace [Dan 8:25]. Here the gospel of peace [Eph 6:15] is known, and the peace of God, which passes all understanding [Phil 4:7]; which is the King of kings, and Lord of lords [Rev 19:16], and Prince of princes' peace, who saith, 'In me you have peace [John 16:33];' and all are bound by the spirit of God to keep his peace; and all his believers, and faithful ones, and true christians, are bound to keep it amongst themselves, and in all their assemblies (his church) which he is the head of.

G. F.

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