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Guide
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Richmond

Teacher Notes
by Patricia
Edwards-DeLancey

1987

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Testimonies : a study guide fo



Testimonies

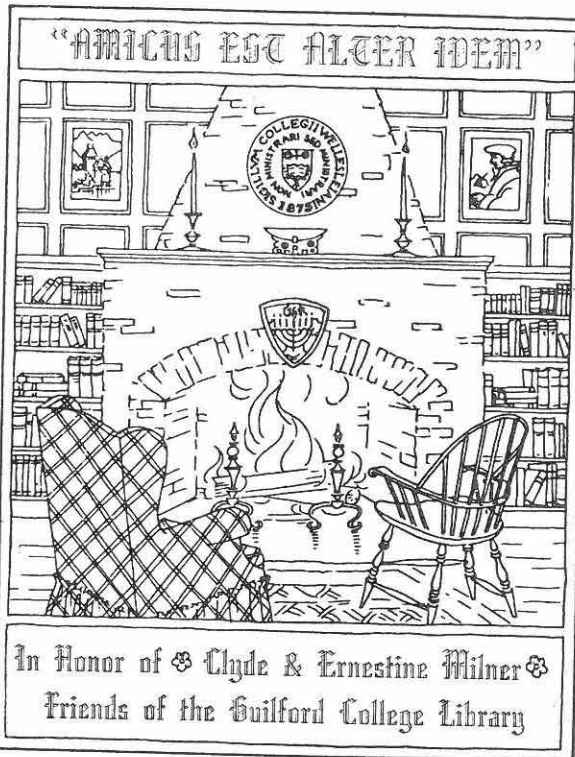
by Ben Richmond

Edited with Teacher Notes
by Patricia Edwards-DeLancey

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Each lesson has several section essay, Quaker quotes, questions additional help with background info for action. Consequently, it will be of the material in one session. This gives the class leader the opportunity to mold the material to fit the character and interests of the meeting/church. It is possible to concentrate primarily on Bible study or to focus on the contemporary issues raised in the questions for discussion. It is my hope that through open sharing that is bathed in prayer, we may come to discern what the Spirit is saying to us today.

Some groups may wish to study all the material in this book. Such a study will require more than the thirteen

er offers suggestions on how to al. Remember, there is more can be shared during a class

The class leader should be aware that in every lesson, deeply held beliefs will be discussed, and it is possible that strong personal feelings or areas of hurt may be touched. It is important to be sensitive to this and to allow time for explicit prayer and silent worship in which healing may occur and new insight come. Of course, the opinions expressed here are my own, and not necessarily those of Friends United Meeting.

Ben Richmond

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BIBLE STUDY

The Source of the Testimonies

In the year after he had heard the voice within him which had said, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition," George Fox says that he passed through the "flaming sword into the paradise of God." The significance of the description of Eden in Genesis 2 is that it provides a picture of life as God intended it to be. Genesis 3 and 4 interpret that picture by contrasting it with life as we experience it.

This study is organized to allow you to explore the meaning of the contrasts in the Biblical text. After reading each set of contrasts, describe in your own words the difference between life as it was intended to be and the life under the influence of sin.

1. Economic Life

IN EDEN: And the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. (NIV 2:9a) [God said] "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden..." (NIV 2:16b)

PARADISE LOST: "[The ground] will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground ..." (NIV 3:18-19a)

THE CONTRAST: _____

2. The World of Work

IN EDEN: The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. (NIV 2:15) ...and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all...(NIV 2:19b-20a)

PARADISE LOST: Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.... (NIV 3:17b)

THE CONTRAST: _____

3. Relationships

IN EDEN: The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone...." (NIV 2:18a) Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh..." (NIV 2:22-23a)

PARADISE LOST (A): And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. (NIV 4:8b) Lamech [6th generation from Adam] said to his wives, "...I have killed a man for wounding me...Lamech [is avenged] seventy-seven times." (NIV 4:23-24)

THE CONTRAST (A): _____

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 1

Source of the Testimonies

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To understand the contrast between "In Eden" and "Paradise Lost" by using the Bible Study.
2. To learn that the testimonies are simply those things which Friends could no longer do without diminishing the message of Christ's salvation.
3. To learn the three points of our focus on Testimonies:
 - a. to understand the vision of redemption is larger than human labels;
 - b. to discern specific ways we are called to testify to our redemption today;
 - c. to recover testimonies as our corporate expressions of truth.

Teaching the Lesson

Share thoughts from The Testimonies. Stress the three critical points mentioned there which guide this study.

Move then to the Bible Study and look at each of the eight areas. Read the Genesis scriptures and contrast the differences between In Eden and Paradise Lost. Review the contrasts and see which Quaker Testimonies are implied in the text.

Keep in mind that the Testimonies are a direct outcome of the power of evil being broken — the expectation that Jesus is to be Lord of all, first within ourselves, then in society, and eventually the world at large. Testimonies are our corporate testimony of what the redeemed life looks like, here and now. Read the quotation by Douglas Gwyn in Quaker Quotes.

Next discuss the Questions for Discussion.

Close with the Edward Burroughs quotation in Quaker Quotes and a short time of silence.

PARADISE LOST (B): Then Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?" (NIV 4:9)

The Lord said, "...You will be a restless wanderer on the earth." (NIV 4:10a,12b)

THE CONTRAST (B): _____

4. Man and Woman

IN EDEN: The Lord God said, "...I will make a helper suitable for him." (NIV 2:18) For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. (NIV 2:24)

PARADISE LOST: To the woman [God] said, "...Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." (3:16)

THE CONTRAST: _____

5. Sexuality

IN EDEN: The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (NIV 2:25)

PARADISE LOST: Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (3:7)

THE CONTRAST: _____

6. Discourse

IN EDEN: The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" (NIV 3:3)

PARADISE LOST: [God asks the man] "Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

The man said, "The woman you put here with me--she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (3:11-13)

THE CONTRAST: _____

7. God and Humanity

IN EDEN: Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day... (NIV 3:8a)

PARADISE LOST: So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden... (3:23) Cain said to the Lord, "...I will be hidden from your presence..." (4:14)

THE CONTRAST: _____

8. Life

IN EDEN: In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (NIV 2:9b) And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." (2:16-17)

PARADISE LOST: After he drove the man out, God placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. (3:24)

THE CONTRAST: _____

The "testimonies" which mark the Religious Society of Friends testify to the reality of the experience claimed by George Fox in 1648:

"that such as were faithful to him in the power and light of Christ, should come up into that state in which Adam was before he fell..."

With this in mind, review the contrasts of life in Eden and life after Paradise was lost, to see which of the Quaker testimonies might be implied in the text.

Some of the traditional Quaker testimonies are: equality of men and women, right sexuality, simplicity, stewardship/right livelihood, goodness of the creation, spiritual communion, spiritual baptism, community, peace, truth speaking.

A FINAL NOTE REGARDING THE SERPENT: So the Lord God said to the serpent... "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring [KJV: seed] and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." (3:14a, 15)

Who is the serpent? Who is the woman? Who is the seed? How did the seed crush the head of the serpent and how did the serpent strike the heel of the seed? [References: Revelation 12; Luke 10:18-19]

The Testimonies

Our souls hunger to experience a life of integrity, love and peace. Too often Christianity has quenched this heart-longing, emphasizing the power of sin in this life while holding out only the promise of a heavenly afterlife. To the modern ear, this does not ring true. The proclamation of Jesus that the kingdom of heaven is at hand is not often heard, and the plain commands of the Sermon on the Mount are too often dismissed as beautiful ideals that cannot be attained.

We Friends have the audacity to appropriate to ourselves Jesus' words: "You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you...This is my command: Love each other." (John 15:14,15,17)

In our experience, the direct outcome of the listening and obeying relationship that is implied in these words is a transformed life. We have come to expect that those who turn to the Spirit of Christ within them will be changed. We expect to see the power of evil broken. We expect Jesus to be Lord of all: first within ourselves and then in society and eventually in the world at large.

The prophetic vision of the new heaven and the new earth, or the vision of "life before the fall," holds more power for us than lists of do's and don'ts. The social Testimonies hold before our eyes, and the eyes of the world, our corporate discernment of what the redeemed life looks like, here and now. The Testimonies visibly refute the despairing lie that the life of the Spirit is unattainable.

The Testimonies arose as first individuals and then the community of the church were led by the Spirit to realise that to engage in this or that specific social custom would be to deny the new life in the Holy Spirit to which they had come. Because Friends refuse to separate "sanctification" from "justification," we sense that disobedience to the work of Christ within is tantamount to refusing salvation.

There are three critical points that will guide this study.

1. We will try to remember that the vision of the redeemed life that has been given us is very big. The Bible Study for this session helps us to see some of the sweep of the vision. All the "Testimonies" relate to each other, and all together they comprise the best picture we have of the peaceable kingdom. The Testimonies transcend the political agendas of "right" and "left," and the social agendas of "liberals" and "evangelicals." It is not permissible for us to pick and choose which "testimonies" we will bear and which we will leave for someone else.

2. A central task for us is to discern the specific ways we are called to testify to our redemption today. As society and social customs change, so must the Testimonies. For instance, plain speech once served as a dynamic spiritual weapon against class stratification and pride. Eventually, as the English language changed, it became a fossilized mark of a sect. Friends eventually realized this, and the old "plain speech" was abandoned. The struggle against the spirit of pride, however, continues. The question always remains, how

is the Lamb of God warring against evil within us and and within society, today?

3. We need to recover the fact that the Testimonies are corporate expressions of truth. One thing that is common to all branches of Friends is the individualism of our lives. We have rightly rejected the destructive and legalistic power of church discipline as it was practiced in the nineteenth century. Today, we are searching to recover a sense of accountability to one another within our communities of faith. To correctly study the Testimonies is not simply to ask the individual question, "how am I going to live?" We are called to ask "how do we sense the spirit of Christ moving us today?"

QUAKER QUOTES

Edward Burrough, 1659 *Works*, p.604:

We are not for names, nor men, nor titles of Government, nor are we for this party nor against the other...but we are for justice and mercy and truth and peace and true freedom, that these may be exalted in our nation, and that goodness, righteousness, meekness, temperance, peace and unity with God, and with one another, that these things may abound.

Douglas Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word* 1986, p.141

"...the famous social testimonies of the early Friends arose not out of a political or sociological analysis, presented with a few biblical proof-texts as garnish. These early testimonies instead began simply as those things which Friends could no longer do without diminishing or even belying the message of Christ's salvation that they preached."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Does your Meeting "major" in one or two of the traditional testimonies of Friends? Is it O.K. to pick and choose?
2. Which of the Friends Testimonies do you think today's society is most in need of?
3. Do you agree with Fox that it is possible to live in "that state in which Adam was before he fell"? Honestly?
4. How is your Meeting helping Friends be faithful to our corporate testimonies?

BIBLE STUDY

The Truth That Sets Us Free

The great dilemma is the presence of evil, the sin that so easily entangles us." (NIV Heb. 12:1) This is what we want to be saved from.

How Did Sin Enter the World?

One of the delights of Biblical faith is that it revels in reality. Faith is anchored in the creation and history of the world. Although human pride and disobedience are important in the story of the fall from grace, the Bible finds the origin of sin in craftiness and deceit. Deceit, which is reality's opposite, is the most profound opposition to God. "The serpent deceived me, and I ate..." (Genesis 3:13) is the terrible confession of fallen humanity.

The Bible identifies Satan as the Deceiver. "He is a liar and the father of lies." (NIV John 8:44) The Revelation of John tells us that our lives are caught in the spiritual warfare between the Deceiver and the Lamb (Revelation 12). Its great promise is that it forseees the ultimate victory of God over "the devil, who deceived them" (20:10).

We joke about the excuse, "The Devil made me do it." What power do you think Satan really has, if any? How does the power work?

Where Are We Vulnerable to Deception?

According to the witness of scripture, almost everywhere! In what aspects of life do the following passages tie deception and sin?

Revelation 2:20

Matthew 13:22;

Obadiah 3; Psalm 36:1-2

Romans 7:11; Matthew 13:22; Luke 21:8

1 Corinthians 3:18-19

Revelation 13:14-17

Why?

The prophet Jeremiah searched most deeply into this question. Finally, he wrote in despair:

"The heart is deceitful above all things
and beyond cure.

Who can understand it."

(Jeremiah 17:9)

For us, the heart is the seat of the emotions. Biblically, however, the heart refers to emotion, thought, personality and will. In short, "heart" is Biblical shorthand for the totality of our inner nature.

What does Jeremiah mean in this verse? Is he right? What about education, more facts, or will-power? Can they help? What is the solution?

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26) Overcoming the deceitfulness of our hearts is what the new covenant is all about.

"This is the covenant I will make...

I will put my law in their minds

and write it on their hearts." (Jeremiah 31:33)

How would you paraphrase this promise?

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 2

Truth

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To learn that the Truth Testimony came from the early Friends experience of salvation which stripped away self deceit through the Light of Christ.
2. To understand what the Bible says about Truth.
3. To apply the Truth Testimony both individually and corporately.

Teaching the Lesson

Open with the humorous incident relating to truth in the first paragraph of "Why a Truth Testimony?" Share other thoughts from this section and the Quaker Quotes.

Turn to the Bible Study, go through it, and answer the questions. As you lead your students in it, be open to the Spirit's leading.

Move next to "Practicing Truth in the Meeting Community" and share thoughts with each other as they arise. This will lead you into the Questions for Discussion section.

Share from "Where Truth Meets the Peace Testimony" as a bridge to next week's lesson.

Close with one or two Quaker Quotes and a prayer to be open to the Truth Testimony in our lives.

What about Jesus?

"Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who believed him, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free'" (John 8:31)

According to Jesus, truth is only found by abiding in him: "I am the way and the truth and the life" (NIV John 14:6).

What difference does the clause, "If you abide in my word" make to this promise? What does it mean?

What is the Christian to do?

We are in the war of the Lamb against the Deceiver. Therefore, Jesus holds us to a strict standard of truth: "Simply let your 'yes' be 'yes,' and your 'no,' 'no,' anything beyond this comes from the evil one" (NIV Matthew 5:37). Oaths and any other deviation from the single standard of truth are demonic; truth--painful though it be--can help to set us, and others, free. Is it possible to hold strictly to the truth? What about the white lies that we tell for kindness' sake?

Why a Truth Testimony?

The story goes that a Friend was riding in a train. His companion, looking out the window, observed, "I see that Farmer Jones has sheared his sheep." The Quaker response: "Well, at least on the south side!" Why this extraordinary and indeed, humorous, insistence on truth?

The foremost reason for the truthfulness that became a Quaker trademark, is that Friends have found their experience of salvation was one of having self-deceit stripped away by the Light of Christ. Margaret Fell's exhortation to "professing" Christians to be ripped up by the Light is a good example. Every deceit, every lie, is known to be a tool of that ancient enemy, the Father of Lies.

Deceit tempts us on many levels. In our personal lives, we are tempted to confuse our personal inclinations with the leadings of God and thus "sanctify" all manner of sin. Often this shows up in manipulative relationships and sexual sin. Many of us have been hurt at this point. Our Meetings have a responsibility to help us become accountable to truth.

However, in our corporate lives as communities of faith, we are subject to deceit as well... Here, we are most tempted by the claims of "fellowship" to avoid the always difficult work of facing the conflicts which are inevitably a feature of our common lives. When our conflicts finally boil over, the momentum of conflict is so great that separation rather than reconciliation often follows.

Deceit operates powerfully in our public lives as well. Economically, we are manipulated to fuel a luxury market, which oppresses the poor. Somehow, we have allowed ourselves to become "consumers" rather than "creators." How

can we re-claim our God-intended roles as people with meaningful work? Above all, deceit is active on the national scale in undergirding the preparation for war. As Senator Hiram Johnson said during the First World War, "The first casualty when war comes is truth."

In 1985, I participated with a group of Christians engaged in prayer at a number of public sites symbolic of concerns ranging from abortion to intervention in Central America. Arrested for blocking the entrance (which incidently had been previously locked against our arrival), one of us stated that he felt Truth had compelled us to this action. The magistrate unwittingly responded with Pilate's question, "What is truth?" (John 18:38).

Neither the law, nor government, nor even we as individuals are geared to handle that question. The answer is to be found in the person of Jesus Christ. Our testimony of truth speaking undergirds all the other social testimonies and uniquely points back to the One who, alone, is Truth.

Practicing Truth in the Meeting Community

1. The annual State of Society report is a good place for us to start practicing truth speaking as a Meeting. Would honest confession of disagreements or lack of love among us open the possibility of deep healing and new unity?
2. Let our business meetings be held as true meetings for worship recalling that "the objective of the Quaker method is to discover Truth which will satisfy everyone more fully than did any position previously held" (Howard Brinton, *Friends for 300 Years*, p.109).
3. Since sin hides behind deception--often self-deception--we need to hold one another accountable to the Truth before God. In *Running the Red Lights*, Charles Mylander elaborates on seven stages for achieving accountability and reconciliation within the Body of Christ. The hope of each stage is for restoration.
 - self-evaluation (Matthew 5:23-24)
 - forbearance (Ephesians 4:1-3)
 - confrontation in private (Matthew 18:15; Romans 15:14)
 - arbitration (Matthew 18:16; 1 Corinthians 6:1-6)
 - appeal to the Body (Matthew 18:17)
 - exclusion (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:3-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-15)
 - restoration (2 Corinthians 2:5-11; James 5:14-16)

Where Truth Meets the Peace Testimony

Recent decades have provided plenty of evidence that truth is the first casualty of war. Since the Second World War, we've had the War Department rechristened, "the Defense Department, "the Missile Gap" to justify a further military build-up when our own spy agency knew we were far ahead in nuclear weapons, "Peace with honor" to describe a war plan that included using nuclear weapons against North Vietnam, "Freedom fighters" to describe terrorists entirely funded by the

United States to overthrow the sovereign state of Nicaragua, and "Peacekeepers" to describe the MX missiles which would bring closer the possibility of first strike nuclear war.

The more fundamental deceit is the claim that the Department of Defense spends its hundreds of billions each year to "defend" the United States.

Howard Morland of the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy writes, "The only definition of defense that has any hope of being accepted universally is direct defense of territory belonging to the soldiers doing the defending."

Using that definition the Coalition came up with a more truthful way of understanding the 1985 U.S. military budget pie.

To acknowledge that 28% of U.S. military expenditures goes to defend West Germany, and that another 29% goes toward possible intervention in the Middle East does not say whether these are good or bad policies. However, it does frame the debate more helpfully than lumping everything together as if it were truly "defense."

QUAKER QUOTES

George Fox 1656, Exhortation to Friends in the Ministry (*Journal*, Ni. 263):

Be valiant for the Truth upon earth; tread and trample all that is contrary under...Spare no deceit. Lay the sword upon it...either by word, or writing, or speaking...

George Fox, "The Line of Righteousness" Epistle 200, 1661:

So speak the truth, whether merchants or tradesmen, and all sorts of people whatsoever, in all your occasions, and in all your tradings, dealings, and doings, speak the truth, act in the truth, and walk in the truth; and this brings righteousness forth. For it answereth the witness of God in every one; which lets every one see all the deeds and actions they have done amiss, and the words which they have spoken amiss...and brings them to the judgment bar, and to condemnation. Here righteousness goes forth...and truth and equity arise both to be acted and spoken.

Margaret Fell, "A Testimony of the Touch-Stone"... 1656: *Works*

..Therefore give over your deceitful dissembling, and turn to that which rips you up, and lays you naked and bare before the Lord God, from whom you cannot hide yourselves. And to the Light of Christ come to be tried and searched...Therefore give over deceiving of your Souls; ...And all Sin and Uncleanness the Light condemns; And if your Hearts condemn you, God is greater; Therefore do not deceive your Souls, but search and try your own selves for if ye know not that Christ is in you, ye are Reprobates. But now ye have the time, prize
6

it, while it is called today...

William Penn, *No Cross, No Crown*:

[On the effect of the serpent's deceit in Genesis 3]: He that enticed them to all this mischief, furnished them with a vain knowledge and pernicious wisdom: the skill of lies and equivocations, shifts, evasions and excuses. They lost their plainness and sincerity: ...he became a crooked, twining, twisting serpent; the image of that unrighteous spirit, to whose temptations he yielded up his obedience and his paradisaical happiness.

London Yearly Meeting, *Christian Faith and Practice*, # 424, 1959:

Since we believe that all men are children of God, we cannot take advantage of our fellows by any form of dishonesty, whether in buying or selling goods, in business or privately, or as employees by failing to give an honest return in labour for the pay we receive. When we have received goods or services, we shall be punctual in making payment of the price agreed on, and we shall not attempt to evade our proper obligations to the community by way of rates or taxes.

Richmond Declaration of Faith, 1887:

We rest upon the plain command of our Lord and Master, "Swear not at all" (Matt v.34.); and we believe any departure from this standard to be prejudicial to the cause of truth and to that confidence between man and man, the maintenance of which is indispensable to our mutual well being.

Charles Mylander, *Running the Red Lights*, 1986

It is amazing how the vocabulary changes when one wants to dismiss the fact of sin. "Sexually active" sounds more inviting than "adultery" or "fornication." "Amoral" often glosses over an activity that is "immoral." Somehow "pro-choice" has a better ring to it than "killing the unborn."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Would following the suggestions in "Practicing Truth in the Meeting Community" open the possibility of healing and new fellowship? On the other hand, is the risk of opening up deep wounds too great? What does "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15) mean?
2. Magazines, radio and television bring a particularly virulent form of deception into our homes. One randomly selected issue of a popular newsweekly contained advertising which suggested that people have (or should have) a "primal, instinctive craving for hamburgers;" that people who didn't eat "burgers" should not be trusted; that "Passion" and "Power"

are associated (not with Christ, but) with a jeep; and that the "brand" of cigarette tells "a lot about a man."

What values are being extolled? After reading Philippians 4:8, discuss how we as individuals (and perhaps as meetings) should maintain our Testimony for Truth in the face of massive advertising.

3. In the Underground Railroad, there were times when telling the whole truth meant the return to slavery of one or more individuals. Today, scrupulous honesty in filling out W-4 (withholding tax) forms means that a conscientious objector to paying for the preparation of war often loses control of the "war tax," and so is unable to carry out the witness. If you were a "clearness committee" for Friends in these situations, what counsel would you give?

4. Public discourse is rife with deceptive language. The "War Department" is officially renamed the "Defense Department." We conduct tests of nuclear missiles to assure that they are "safe, secure, reliable." The insurgents we fund and train are "Founding Fathers," and "freedom fighters;" insurgents funded by others are "terrorists."

How should, and can you or your Meeting "speak truth to power"?

BIBLE STUDY

The Gospel of Peace

The Gospel of Peace

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (NIV John 14:27).

What is this unusual peace?

Read Ephesians 2:11-21. Verses 15-16 say that Christ's purpose was, "to make one new person in himself out of two [who had been enemies]; by making peace he would reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, putting the enmity to death..." [trans. BR]. John Stoner's "A Modest Proposal for Peace," suggests that "the Christians of the world agree not to kill one another." Is this a fair expression of the hope of the cross? What would the world be like if Christians did this?

The Ethic of Love

Peace is not an ethic to live by; it is the result of having been reconciled to God. Jesus, however, does give an ethic in the Sermon on the Mount: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..." (NIV Matthew 5:43-44).

What is different about the condition of being at peace, and a life based on the ethic of love?

In 1658, James Nayler wrote about "the weapons" in "the Lamb's War." He says that the Lamb first breaks the individual's "peace and rest in sin," and then "he waits in patience to prevail...by suffering all the rage and... evil entreatings that the evil spirit that rules in the creature can cast upon him, and he receives it with meekness and pity to the creature, returning love for hatred wrestling with God against the enmity with prayers..." (in *Early Quaker Writings*, p.107)

What is the false peace that Nayler is talking about? What is the goal of the love ethic? Is suffering a necessary part of the love ethic? See Colossians 1:24.

The Armor of God

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the whole armor of God..." Read Ephesians 6: 10-17 NIV.

A true follower of Christ is an avowed enemy of all evil. The weapons of the Lamb's War are strengthened by the armor of God. Role play putting on this armor in order to stand strong in the Lord. Have everyone stand up.

"Gird your loins with truth." The girdle is the first piece of armor to be put on. It is the movement from restfulness to action. Truth is not right doctrine, but sincerity and inward truthfulness. The Captain of our salvation wants followers to know what they are about, understand the difficulties of service, and enlist with their eyes wide open. The tightening of the girdle marks a strengthening of purpose.

"Put on the breastplate of righteousness." The breastplate protected one's heart, the most vulnerable part of one's body. For without the heart's action, there is no life. A breastplate of self-righteousness would make poor protection for the heart. Paul encourages Christ's followers to put on God's righteousness to protect our inner heart.

"Shod your feet with the... gospel of peace." The spiked sandals of a Roman soldier enabled him to hold his position in a hand-to-hand conflict. To understand the gospel of peace is to be prepared to withstand the evil forces around the world, and having done all, to stand firmly in place. Steadfastness is steadfastness.

"Take the shield of faith." The shield of a Roman soldier was four feet long, long enough to protect almost the entire body. Our shield of faith covers our whole person

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 3

Peace and the Gospel

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To learn the Biblical basis of the gospel of peace.
2. To study the historic Friends Peace Testimony and the Lamb's War.
3. To consider the implications of the Peace Testimony in our individual lives today -- are we redeemed in Christ? Are we engaged in the Lamb's War? Are we living a positive life in the ministry of reconciliation?

Teaching the Lesson

Read the Quaker Quote by George Fox from A Declaration of 1660. Begin the Bible Study and discuss each section — the gospel of peace, the ethic of love, and the armor of God.

Next begin to study "The Peace Testimony." Stress that peace is not based on fear but is a positive way of life based on our redemption through Jesus Christ.

Consider the Questions for Discussion. There may be several differing opinions expressed during this period. Remember the ministry of reconciliation and focus on the positive aspects of peacemaking.

Close by reading the Quaker Quote by Robert Barclay. Allow a period of silence to hear what God would be saying to each individual.

Remember, this is the first of three lessons on The Peace Testimony and serves as an introduction. Specific issues of conscription and war tax resistance are considered in the next two lessons.

and we stand unhurt amid the flaming arrows.

"Put on the helmet of salvation." The helmet protected one's head and also held the only ornamental part of the armor-- a waving plume. The hope of salvation is the Christian's glory and joy.

"Take the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." We move from armor for protection of one's body to the battle itself. In the Lamb's War, our weapon is to come into that Spirit which gave forth the Scriptures. Christ is the Word of God revealed to humanity (see John 1). We are to become so familiar with the Bible as the Words of God, and live in the Spirit of the Word of God which is Christ, that we can fight the battles against evil.

Finally, link your arms together so that you can move forward into battle. Note, there is no armor for your back. The Roman soldiers linked their arms together as they either moved forward or stood firm. Then they were protected. But if they broke that link and turned to flee, they were fully exposed to the arrows of the enemy. As Christians, we need to remain linked with our faith community so that we are not exposed, but rather protected from head to foot.

How did you feel as you put on the armor of God? How did the role play change your understanding of the importance of the Lamb's War? Of the importance of the Christian community to help us stand firm?

The Peace Testimony and the Gospel

This generation is the first to realize that human hands, rather than God's, may fulfill the prophecy: "The end of the world is near!" Out of fear that nuclear technology may indeed bring the end of human history, many Christians have become nuclear pacifists. Friends, who have held a corporate testimony against "all outward wars and and strife and fightings with outward weapons" since 1660, welcome the growing clamor for peace from the churches.

But fear is not the basis for our peace testimony. In the often quoted 1660 Declaration, Friends put the peace testimony on an altogether different foundation. "Running with swords...one\against another," they said, "...hath its foundation from this unrighteous world, from the foundation of which the Lamb hath been slain, which Lamb hath redeemed us from the unrighteous world, and we are not of it, but are heirs of a world in which there is no end and of a kingdom where no corruptible thing enters. And our weapons are spiritual and not carnal, yet mighty through God to the plucking down of the strongholds of Satan, who is the author of wars..." (George Fox's *Journal*: 402)

The Friends Peace Testimony is first of all a testimony to redemption through Jesus Christ. The entirety of our lives should proclaim that we have "passed through the flaming sword" and entered into the wholeness of shalom. If we refuse to bear arms, we do so because it is inconsistent with the tenor of our new lives. We are mindful that the first social interaction after the expulsion from the Garden of Eden was Cain's envious murder of Abel. To kill would be to deny our salvation and imitate the fallen life of Cain.

Secondly, the testimony of peace is essential in the spiritual war against evil. True evangelism is undergirded by a life that willingly endures, but never willingly inflicts, suffering. Ephesians 6:15 tells us that our feet should be shod with "the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace" if we

are to participate in the spiritual warfare of our time. The cross of Christ cannot be proclaimed in an inward and saving way until those who proclaim it also proclaim—and live—Jesus' own ethic of long-suffering love.

The peace testimony is primarily a positive way of life. It has many different outward expressions, as God lays different tasks upon each of our hearts. Some are called to the work of citizen diplomacy--working directly for international reconciliation. Some are called to service--healing the wounds of war and assisting the development of nations which have been hurt by an unjust economic order. Others are called to tasks of mediation and reconciliation within their own neighborhoods, families and even Meetings. Yet others are called to the task of explicit evangelism: overcoming the barriers of hostility between individuals and the Spirit of God. In all these ways, and many others, we carry out the "ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18) which is the positive expression of the peace testimony.

Our Meetings have the responsibility of encouraging each of us to be faithful to these tasks. And when society demands that we participate in its outward warfares, our Meetings have the responsibility of holding us to our Christian discipline. We have been called to be peacemakers, among people and between people and God.

QUAKER QUOTES

George Fox, et al, *A Declaration of 1660*:

We do utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever. And 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 do certainly know, and so 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....

George Fox, *Epistle 178*:

All Friends everywhere, who are dead to all carnal weapons, and have beaten them to pieces, stand in that which takes away the occasion of wars, in the power which saves men's lives, and destroys none, nor would have others....to bear and carry carnal weapons to fight with....

George Fox, *Epistle 9*, 1652:

The peacemaker hath the kingdom, and is in it; and hath the dominion over the peace-breaker, to calm him in the power of God.

William Penn, *No Cross No Crown*:

O the miserable state of these pretended Christians! who instead of Christ's and his apostles' doctrine, of loving enemies, and blessing them that curse them, teach the people, under the notion of Christian zeal, most inhumanly to butcher one another; and, instead of suffering their own blood to be

shed for the testimony of Jesus, they shed the blood of the witnesses of Jesus, as heretics. Thus that subtle serpent...rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience.

Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the Truth Christian Divinity*, 1678:

Whoever can reconcile this, "Resist not evil," with "Resist violence by force"; again, "Give also thy other cheek," with "Strike again"; also, "Love thine enemies," with "Spoil them, make a prey of them, pursue them with fire and the sword,"...whoever, I say, can find a means to reconcile these things may be supposed also to have found a way to reconcile God with the Devil, Christ with Antichrist, Light with Darkness, and good with evil.

The Richmond Declaration of Faith, 1887:

We feel bound explicitly to avow our unshaken persuasion that all war is utterly incompatible with the plain precepts of our divine Lord and Lawgiver... who hath said "Love your enemies." We would, in humility, but in faithfulness to our Lord, express our firm persuasion that all the exigencies of civil government and social order may be met under the banner of the Prince of Peace, in strict conformity with His commands.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Consider the implications of the peace testimony in our individual lives today. Do you agree that to be redeemed in Christ means to be engaged in the Lamb's War, living out a ministry of reconciliation? If we are not doing all of these things all of the time, how can we begin to move toward more fully implementing them in our daily walk? Do we want to?
2. George Fox wrote a letter to Charles II in 1660 declaring the Friends Peace Testimony (see Quaker Quotes). If you were to write a letter to the President today, what would you put in it?
3. How did you feel after you participated in the role play of the Armor of God? How did it help you better understand the Lamb's War and the importance of the Christian community in bearing the gospel of peace into the world?
4. Do you struggle with the Peace Testimony in your daily life? How are you a minister of reconciliation in your family, community, and meeting/church? Where do you need help? If you feel free to share, also remember to hold each other up in prayer.

BIBLE STUDY

Conscription

Old Testament Warfare

The most frequent objection to Jesus' love ethic advanced by Christians is that God in the Old Testament commands his people to go to war, not once, but frequently. Try applying the principles of Old Testament holy war to our modern situation:

God Does the Fighting

Exodus 14-15 describes the escape of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt. After miraculously crossing the Red Sea, Moses and Miriam lead the people in a victory song in which they say, "Yahweh is a warrior" (Exodus 15:3 JB). In his instructions to the people, Moses gives the conclusive definition of Old Testament holy war: "The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be still." (14:14).

Human Might Is an Obstacle

When Gideon gathered an army (at God's command) to drive off the Midian oppressors, God said to him, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, 'My own hand has delivered me'" (Judges 7:2). After reducing them to the absurd number of 300 soldiers, God sent them forth armed with only trumpets and torches inside jars (7:16).

A Standing Army Is a Curse

When the elders of Israel got tired of God's way of organizing their defense, they demanded a "regular" king. 1 Samuel 8:10-17, is God's warning that the people will be cursed with conscription, heavy taxes and oppression as a result of their demand.

The Volunteer Army

Deuteronomy 24:5 - The newly married man is exempt from service for a year.
Judges 7:3 - "Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home."

The Hope of Disarmament

It is the Old Testament prophets who gave the world the vision of the peaceable kingdom. Christians claim that in Christ the time is fulfilled. That is why, when Jesus says, "You have heard it said,....,but I say....," we do not hear it as blasphemy but, instead, receive it as great good news. Compare what follows with modern proposals for disarmament.

It shall come to pass in the latter days...
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more;
but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree,
and none shall make them afraid;
for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.
(Micah 4:1,3,4)

For behold, I create new heavens
and a new earth;
and the former things shall not be remembered
or come to mind....

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,
the lion shall eat straw like the ox;

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 4

Peace and Conscription

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To learn how Old Testament warfare is different from modern warfare.
2. To see that our hope of disarmament comes from the Vision of the Peaceable Kingdom.
3. To confront the questions concerning conscription and begin formulating a personal response.

Teaching the Lesson

Open with the "Peace Testimony and Conscription." Answer the question posed at the end of the second paragraph.

Begin the Bible Study. Old Testament warfare has probably been a concern of your students, so carefully go through each point, but make sure you have plenty of time to focus on point five, The Hope of Disarmament.

If students are unfamiliar with the laws concerning conscription, share from that topic. Then begin the role play described under the Questions for Discussion. How would they answer these questions?

Close with either a Quaker Quote or re-read the Peaceable Kingdom passages at the end of the Bible Study. Pray for the young men and women in your meeting who will be or are facing this issue.

and dust shall be the serpent's food.
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain,
says the Lord.

Isaiah 65:17,25

The Peace Testimony and Conscription

On October 30, 1650, Fox was committed to the House of Correction in Derby England, on charges of blasphemy. He had stated that "Christ my Savior hath taken away my sin, and in him there is no sin." That was deeply offensive to those who hoped for righteousness only in the life to come. The next April, Fox was offered freedom and a captaincy in the army. He records in his *Journal*, "But 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' doctrine" (James 4:1f). The refusal of this and a second draft attempt, caused his sentence to be lengthened by another six months.

Had he agreed to participate in war, could Fox have maintained that in Christ "there is no sin?"

Conscription in the United States

In 1975, with the conclusion of U. S. intervention in Indochina, the United States stopped registering and drafting people into the armed forces.

In 1980, registration for the draft was begun again. In Congressional debate, the main purpose given for registration was to demonstrate our national resolve to the Soviet Union. The Director of Selective Service called registration a "weapon in our arsenal like a bomber or missile."

Draft Registration

All male citizens in the United States who have been born on or after January 1, 1963 are required to register for the draft within 30 days of their 18th birthday. The penalty for failing to register can be up to five years in jail and/or a substantial fine.

Some Friends have felt compelled by conscience to refuse to participate in the conscription system by registering for the draft. Of the thousands of non-registrants since 1980, only 20 have been prosecuted. The penalties have ranged from two-year prison sentences to heavy fines.

Conscientious Objection To Military Service

Section 6(j) of the Military Selective Service Act states:

Nothing contained in this title shall be construed to require any person to be subject to combatant training and service in the armed forces of the United States who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form...the term "religious training and belief" does not include essentially political, sociological, or philosophical views, or a merely personal moral code. Any person...whose claim is sustained by the local board shall, if he is inducted into the armed forces...be assigned to noncombatant service...or shall, if he is found to be conscientiously opposed to participation in such

noncombatant service...perform... civilian work contributing to the maintenance of the national health, safety, or interest...

There is no way for a prospective conscientious objector to indicate his CO status when he registers for the draft, although some write a brief note on their registration card.

The Selective Service System has prepared regulations for the resumption of inductions. According to these, from the time an individual receives an induction notice, only ten (10) days will be allowed in which to file a claim for deferment. *This is not sufficient time to prepare a convincing claim.*

Meetings have the responsibility to see to it that their members of draft age have thought about and prepared materials in support of a conscientious objector claim. Key elements in a supporting file are:

1. Five to seven support letters from people who know the claimant well, and who can attest to the sincerity of the claim (even though they may personally disagree).
2. A worksheet answering the questions from the official CO claim form (see below).
3. Any "evidence" that illustrates your beliefs such as writings, news clippings, service or peace activities.

CO Claim Documentation Form Questions

1. Describe your beliefs which are the reasons for your claiming conscientious objection to combatant military training and service or to all military training and service.
2. Describe how and when you acquired these beliefs. Your answer may include such information as the influence of family members or other persons; training, if applicable; your personal experiences; membership in organizations; books and readings which influenced you.
3. Explain what most clearly shows that your beliefs are deeply held. You may wish to include a description of how your beliefs affect the way you live.

Congress has enacted legislation to deny financial aid to those who fail to register. Several Quaker colleges make special assistance available to conscientious objectors to registration.

QUAKER QUOTES

New England Yearly Meeting, *Queries*, 1986:

Do you "live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars"? Do you faithfully maintain Friends' testimony against military preparations and all participation in war, as inconsistent with the teachings and spirit of Christ? Do you strive to increase understanding and use of non-violent methods of resolving conflicts?

Do you take your part in the ministry of reconciliation between individuals, groups, and nations? When discouraged, do you remember that Jesus said, "Peace is my parting gift to you, my own peace, such the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest, and banish your fears"? John 14:27 (NEB).

1981 Triennial, Friends United Meeting:

Cognizant of the fact that the young men of the United States must now legally register with the Selective Service, we encourage monthly meetings to give counsel, information, and support to those involved....We suggest that Meetings record in their Minutes the names of those who wish to declare that they are conscientious objectors to participation in war.

Regardless of the choice made by the individual, he should be given all respect and encouragement to follow the inner leadings of his conscience. This choice may include one of the following forms:

First, to register according to the law, and to be recorded as a conscientious objector with this own Monthly Meeting.

Second, to refuse to register (in this case, the legal consequences must be carefully considered).

Third, to register with the intent of serving if drafted into the armed forces even though this diverges from the historic testimony of Friends.

2. Would you use force to prevent a maniac from killing an innocent person?

3. Wasn't Hitler a maniac?

4. What method would you use to resist evil?

5. What would you do if someone were attacking your mother?

What Have You Done?

1. How can you prove that you're a CO?

2. What will you do if your application is denied?

[Adopted from Robert A. Seeley, *Handbook for Conscientious Objectors*, 13th Edition, April, 1981, pp. 189-191.]

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Let several members of the class take the role of the examining Board and the remainder of the class take the role of an individual seeking classification as a conscientious objector. Here are some questions from which the Board may select (Note: they are not all legitimate questions).

The Nature of Your Belief

1. What does your church say about war?

2. Why do so many of your members enter into military service?

3. Why did Christ say, "He that hath no sword, let him buy one," and "I came not to bring peace, but a sword"?

4. How do you explain the fact that in the Old Testament, God commanded the people to go to war?

5. Is your objection to killing, or being killed?

6. Can no war be just and necessary regardless of the situation?

Why Not 1-A-0?

1. Can you say that a medic helping a dying soldier is an immoral act and can never be an expression of God's love?

2. If you don't believe in killing, why let a wounded soldier die?

On the Use of Force

1. Do you honestly think the Armed Forces should be abolished?

Render Unto Caesar

Read Mark 12:13-17. The Pharisees and Herodians were looking for a way to get rid of Jesus. They tried to trap him into an expression of support for tax resistance. This would have been seen as an endorsement of the Zealot's violent struggle for liberation from Rome. Jesus said to them, "Bring me a coin ... Whose likeness and inscription is this?" (RSV) They produced the coin, with its bust of Tiberius and its inscription, "Caesar is god." How do you suppose that the Pharisees felt to be caught in open violation of the first two commandments ("You shall have no other gods before me" and "You shall not make yourself a graven image...")? What did it mean for the Pharisees to be carrying Roman coinage as opposed to the coinage minted by the Temple? When we ask about paying taxes for war preparation, what might Jesus ask us?

Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." Why did this answer "amaze" them?

Continue to Mark 12:28-34. In Mark, the debate between Jesus and the rulers continued. Finally, a scribe asked, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus responded, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark records that when the scribe agreed, Jesus "said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And after that no one dared to ask him any question."

It seems that Jesus has thrown the question of our ultimate allegiance back upon us. What is God's and what is Caesar's? (See also Matthew 5:43-48).

Read Luke 23:1-5. We have tended to hear "render to Caesar" as counsel to pay taxes without question. It appears that Jesus' contemporaries heard something else. One of the charges brought at His trial was, "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king." Pilate wanted Jesus to tell him how much truth there was in this charge, but Jesus' answer was indirect. Certainly, He is Christ a King. What about the other charges?

Read Romans 12-13. In Romans 13:1-7, Paul gives instruction about being subject to governing authorities, concluding with the words, "Pay all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due."

The context is provided by the verses immediately surrounding this passage. Romans 12:14-21 is one of the strongest teachings in the Bible on loving enemies: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 13:8-10 returns us to Jesus' teaching of the commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

When there is a conflict between obedience to governing authorities and the great commandment, what should a Christian do?

The Peace Testimony and Taxes

"I admired the conscientious objectors and supported them. Because I couldn't be drafted, I thought there was nothing more I could do. Then I realized that my money was being drafted." (suburban housewife quoted in Edith Adamson, *"For Conscience Sake"*),

William Rotch, a Nantucket Quaker during the Revolutionary War found himself in an unusual situation. In payment of a debt, he had accepted a consignment of muskets some years earlier which he sold as fowling pieces; the bayonets, which he had removed, sat in an unused warehouse. In 1776, the American army demanded the bayonets. He explained his refusal to hand them over:

LESSON 5

Peace and War Tax Resistance

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To learn "the antidote to despair is a life of utter obedience to the inward promptings of God."
2. To study the scriptural basis of war tax resistance.
3. To consider modern expressions of bearing witness to the gospel of peace.

Teaching the Lesson

Begin with the story of William Rotch during the Revolutionary War. Share other comments at the end of that section.

Move next to the Bible Study. Look closely at the Scripture passages and answer the questions.

Consider the Yearly Meeting Statements on War Tax Resistance OR look at the Possibilities for Action. Use the Questions for Discussion at appropriate places during the class. Should non-War Tax Resisters be known as "disorderly walkers" today? (See 1785 minute from New England Yearly Meeting.)

Close with Mark 12: 29-31. Pray for all to seek the Kingdom of God and be obedient to the inward promptings of the Spirit.

"As this instrument is purposely made and used for the destruction of mankind, I can put no weapon into a man's hand to destroy another, that I cannot use myself in the same way."

Rotch went on to record the rest of his story:

"A short time after I was called before a Committee appointed by the Court then held at Watertown near Boston, and questioned amongst other things respecting my bayonets.

"I gave a full account of my proceedings, and closed it with saying, 'I sunk them in the bottom of the sea. I did it from principle, I have ever been glad that I had done it, and if I am wrong I am to be pitied.' The Chairman of the Committee, Major Hawley, (a worthy character) then addressed the committee, and said, 'I believe Mr. Rotch has given us a candid account, and every man has a right to act consistently with his religious principles, but I am sorry that we could not have the bayonets, for we want them very much.'...One of the Committee in a pert manner observed, 'Then your principles are passive Obedience and non-resistance.' I replied, 'No, my friends, our principles are active Obedience or passive suffering.'" [*Christian Faith and Practice #622*]

To the extent that they involve us in preparations that reasonable people forecast will lead to the destruction of the world, our taxes represent an even more pressing difficulty than did William Rotch's bayonets. Confronted by the fact that over 55% of the U.S. Federal tax (over 12% of the Canadian Federal tax) goes to military purposes, we are required to discern within our meetings if war tax refusal is a necessary corporate testimony.

Friends are not tax evaders; we are torn by the fact that a (diminishing) portion of our taxes support projects we deeply believe in. Like others, we do not relish the thought of breaking the law.

When we know that modern warfare is as dependent on costly technology as warfare used to be dependent upon muskets and bayonets, can we willingly submit to the "money draft"? The question for Christians is whether we can, without protest, contribute to the destruction of the world which God loved so much that he sent his only Son to save?

As yet, Friends as a whole have no corporate testimony on this subject. But many of our members are deeply troubled in spirit. These words from the Resource Committee on Tax Resistance of the Friends Meeting at Cambridge (New England Yearly Meeting) are helpful:

"There are many ways to express to the government your distress over war taxes through war tax resistance. Different people are led to different actions, and we cannot expect uniformity in our means of expressing the peace testimony. You may choose different means at different times, depending on personal and family circumstances."

There is only one antidote to despair: a life of utter obedience to the inward promptings of God. Even small steps of faith breathe new hope into a world that has lost its way. They serve as an invitation to others also to join the great experiment of life in Christ.

Possibilities for Action

- 1) SUPPORTING the National Peace Tax Fund Bill.
- 2) ARRANGING TO STUDY the issue of war taxes in your meeting. (Resources from Friends Committee on War Tax Concerns could be a help.)
- 3) BEARING WITNESS to the Gospel of Peace.
 - a) Fill out your return correctly; pay the tax due; include a

letter concerning the conflict between paying for war and your Christian faith. (NOTE: comments written on IRS forms may incur a \$500 "frivolous return" penalty. A separate letter enclosed with your return will not.) Send copies of your letter to friends and member of Congress.

b) IRS offers to complete your tax calculations if you fill out your 1040 fully. Give them this opportunity and ask how you, as a conscientious objector to war taxes who otherwise wished to pay the full share of tax due, can do so without violating your religious beliefs and without being assessed a "frivolous" penalty. File early enough to give IRS time to respond.

4) REFUSING VOLUNTARY PAYMENT of war taxes.

a) The Federal tax on your telephone bill was imposed to pay for World War II and continued to pay for the Indochina War. Deduct the amount indicated from your payment and include a note of explanation to the telephone company. The utility is not permitted to interrupt your service because of failure to pay the tax. They should notify the IRS which will deal directly with you. Usually the only penalty is a 6% fee plus an interest charge.

b) Income tax resistance. Correctly complete form 1040 and refuse to pay some, or all, of the amount due. Some refuse to pay a symbolic amount (say \$10); some, the percentage which goes to the military or to the nuclear build-up (see each year's March, FCNL Newsletter); some, the entire amount (reasoning that a substantial proportion of whatever amount is sent will go to the military). (Note: War tax deductions and other statements of conscience on IRS forms may be subjected to the 'frivolous return' penalty of \$500. Failure to pay, or underpayment, is subject to a charge for interest plus penalties of up to 50% of the underpayment.)

c) Withholding tax. Many Friends who are deeply upset about their tax contribution to the military have all of their tax liability, and more, withheld by their employer. Other than self-employment, there are a couple of possible courses of action.

i) Claim a refund (1040X) claiming a refund for war taxes erroneously or excessively collected. This may be considered a 'frivolous return' and penalized \$500.

ii) In order to regain control of that amount of your tax which you intend to refuse, you may need to claim extra allowances on your W4 form. (Circular E will tell you how much.) Your employer is not required to, but may, report to IRS "suspicious" W4 claims. IRS automatically questions claims of 14 or more allowances. (NOTE: You may be subject to a \$500 penalty, but this is rarely applied in cases where less than 14 allowances have been claimed.)

5) FOLLOWING THROUGH

a) Friends are not tax evaders. In order to give clear expression to the witness, Friends have sent the resisted money to charitable organizations or placed it in an escrow account established for the purpose, such as FUM's Peace Tax Fund. Let IRS and Congress know what you are doing.

b) Because war-tax resistance is civil disobedience, it should not be undertaken lightly. Legal advice and additional information can be helpful and necessary. It is good to have good technical assistance. It is also good to have the support of fellow Christians who can help one another be centered in Jesus Christ. Do seek a clearness committee or other support group.

c) Should IRS impose a fine or penalty, there are groups in various areas to help bear the burden. For instance, the Penalty Sharing Community of Iowa Peace Network (of which Iowa Yearly Meeting-FUM is a part) has a number of people pledged to share such fines.

Friends United Meeting Peace Tax Fund

In 1981, the General Board of FUM minuted that "FUM will support those staff persons who conscientiously take a stand against paying war taxes." In 1982, the General Board approved an "escrow account set up for conscientious with-holders of war taxes..." In 1984, the General Board opened the FUM Peace Tax Fund "to all potential depositors who are members of FUM."

In 1986 there have been nine depositors in this Fund. These include 8 individuals and one Monthly Meeting who have deposited a total of \$3,974.17.

In 1986, one depositor suffered an IRS lien, and according to the terms of the Fund, her deposit was returned at her request.

On October 1, 1986, the total amount on deposit with the Fund was \$3,452.17. That amount has been invested in an account with Pax World Fund, Inc. Pax World Fund "seeks investments in companies producing life supportive goods and services and that are not to any degree engaged in manufacturing defense or weapons-related products..."

The Fund agreement with depositors provides that income from deposits with the Fund, "shall be used by FUM for life-affirming activities consistent with Friends' principles." Income from investments has accumulated since the inception of the Fund. In 1986, \$856.91 was given to the two Friends Schools in Ramallah for use in scholarship assistance to Palestinian children in that area which is so in need of the seeds of reconciliation.

Friends with inquiries about the Peace Tax Fund, or desiring to deposit refused war taxes, should write the Friends United Meeting offices, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374.

QUAKER QUOTES

George Fox, *Epistle 178*, (1659):

And as for the rulers, that are to keep peace, for peace's sake, and the advantage of truth, give them their tribute. But to bear and carry carnal wapons to fight with, the men of peace, (which live in that which takes away the occasion of wars,) they cannot act in such things... but have paid their tribute. Which they may do still for peace sake,...; and in so doing, Friends may better claim their liberty.

John Woolman, *Journal*, 1755:

[From a letter issued by twenty Friends during the French and Indian War]:

And being painfully apprehensive that the large Sum granted by the late act of Assembly for the Kings use is principally intended for purposes inconsistent with our peaceable Testimony, we therefore think that as we cannot be concerned in wars and fightings, so neither ought we to Contribute thereto by paying the Tax directed by the said Act, though

suffering be the Consequence of our refusal; which we hope to be enabled to bear with patience.

...Some part of the money to be raised by the said act is said to be for...Benevolent purposes...and we could most Cheerfully contribute to those purposes if they were not so mixed...Our Fidelity to the present Government, and our willingly paying all Taxes for purposes which do not interfere with our Consciences may justly Exempt us from the Imputation of disloyalty...

Iowa's Yearly Meeting, FUM, 1985:

Taxation for military purposes has become a matter of conscience for many Friends. We urge support for the World Peace Tax Fund.

New York Yearly Meeting *Faith and Practice*, 1983:

In light of our historic peace testimony, New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) strongly supports passage of the World Peace Tax Fund Bill...We support the tax witness of those who place in escrow, or similarly set aside, the military portion of their taxes in anticipation of passage of the bill...We are advised to "beware of supporting preparations for war even indirectly, examining in this light...investments in war industries and voluntary payment of war taxes."

Henry Cadbury (1953) in New England Yearly Meeting *Faith and Practice*:

Taxes for war purposes have again and again raised problems for Friends, with no final solution of universal approval or disapproval...In modern times some Friends have refused to pay at least that proportion of income tax which corresponds to the proportion of the national budget spent on military matters. That the government has ways of collecting these amounts without consent has doubtless discouraged others from attempting refusal.

Barbara Reynolds, Member of Long Beach Friends Church, CA, 1985:

From 1960 to 1969, I lived in Hiroshima, feeling the urgency and frustration of the hibakusha (the A-bomb affected people)...Since returning to my own country in 1969...I have contributed my efforts (for peace) and have avoided paying taxes for war by keeping my income below taxable level...In 1983-84, however, I was confronted for the first time with the need to come to terms with IRS tax laws.

The decision was not difficult...I am convinced that Jesus Christ, whom I serve, is calling me to a position of total non-cooperation with war including the threat to use any weapons, whether nuclear or otherwise, that would bring about the indiscriminate death of hundreds of thousands for whom Christ died...

1785, Minute of New England Yearly Meeting:

It is the concern of this meeting to recommend to the several monthly meetings, that they, consistent with our

ancient testimony, refuse the payment of all taxes expressly or specifically for the support of war, whether called for in money, provisions or otherwise; and that such friends as do actively pay such taxes be dealt with as disorderly walkers.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Jesus puts the question of our ultimate allegiance to us. At what point does allegiance to God override allegiance to government? Is it at Hitler's extermination of the Jews? At preparation for nuclear war?

2. Consider the Federal budget. Because we live in secular nations, what proportion of the budget could be spent on the military before it became a matter of conscience for you?

3. Do you agree that faithfulness to the peace testimony is important to evangelism?

4. How does your Meeting recognize and support Friends who may suffer for conscience sake?

5. Should Friends have a united discipline regarding war taxes, as we did during the American Revolution? (See the 1785 Minute of New England Yearly Meeting.)

Our Daily Bread

When you pray, say:

Father,
hallowed be your name;
may your kingdom come;
give us our daily bread each day;
forgive us our sins,
for we forgive everyone who is indebted to us;
and do not bring us to the test.
(Luke 11:2-4, my translation)

Jesus gave this prayer as instruction to a group of people who had responded to his proclamation and were already his disciples. In studying the prayer, we need to look at the assumptions that undergird the prayer.

Kingdom People

The first set of assumptions revolve around Jesus proclamation that, "the Kingdom of God is at hand."

What does it mean to pray that God's name be "hallowed"? (See Deuteronomy 5:6-10; 6:4-5). What does the phrase "kingdom of heaven" mean to you? What time frame do you have in mind when you pray, "may your kingdom come"?

Forgiving Debts

The second assumption was that the members of the community would be able to say, "we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us."

Read Deuteronomy 15:1-4 and the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-9).

What rule about debts applies in God's kingdom? (Deuteronomy 15:1-2). What is God's purpose? (Deuteronomy 15:4). Why did Jesus say to Zacchaeus, "today salvation has come to this house"? (Luke 19:9)

What is Jesus assuming about the life of his disciples when he teaches them to say "we forgive everyone who is indebted to us"? Should the community life described in Acts 2:42-45 and 4:32-35 be normative for us?

Our Daily Bread

The third assumption Jesus had was that the disciples would experience forgiving debts as a source of anxiety. What was Jesus "antidote" to that anxiety? (See Matthew 6:25-33 and Mark 10:29-31) Have you had any experience that has built your confidence in God's willingness and ability to answer this petition for "daily bread"?

The Test

The traditional translation of the last petition ("lead us not into temptation") is confusing and inaccurate. God does not "tempt" us (James 1:13). The same word is regularly translated "test" in other places. This is how it appears in Exodus 16.

This is the only other place in the Bible where "daily bread" (the manna in the wilderness) is associated with people being tested by God.

"Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove [NIV, et al: test] them, whether they will walk in my law or not.'" (Ex 16:4)

What is the test? What is the result of failing the test? (See Ex 16:20) What is idolotry? (See Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5 and Matthew 6:24) How is our community of faith faring in this test?

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 6

Simplicity

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To gain the biblical basis of the Simplicity Testimony.
2. To understand the three marks of simplicity — spiritual power, calling people to Christ, and a life of joy.
3. To take hold of the Simplicity Testimony and apply it to one's lifestyle.

Teaching the Lesson

Begin by having the students share what the Simplicity Testimony means to them.

Read the Lord's Prayer and go through the assumptions undergirding it which are found in the Bible Study. Answer the questions as you go along.

Move to the three marks of simplicity found in "The Testimony of Simplicity"—spiritual power, calling people to Christ, and a life of joy. Has this been the conception and/or experience of simplicity for your students?

Consider the suggestions in Simplicity: Taking Hold. Then answer the Questions for Discussion.

Close with the Quaker Quote by Thomas Kelly and a short period of silence.

The Testimony of Simplicity

God is concerned to redeem all aspects of life, including the economic. The testimony to simplicity is at the heart of Friends response to this concern. Because simplicity is a response of God's concern, we find in return that simplicity is a key not only to right economics but to spiritual power as well. Simplicity calls people to Christ and to a quality of life that is marked by joy.

Spiritual Power

In 1764, John Smith, a Friend who could still remember the early days of the Quaker movement, spoke to a meeting of ministers and elders, saying that "he well remembered, that, in those early times, Friends were a plain, lowly-minded people, and that there was much tenderness, and contrition in their meetings. That, at twenty years from that time, the Society increasing in wealth and in some degree conforming to the fashions of the world, true humility was less apparent, and their meetings in general were not so lively and edifying. That at the end of forty years many of them were grown very rich, and many of the Society made a specious appearance in the world;...and, as such things became more prevalent, so the powerful overshadowings of the Holy Ghost were less manifest in the Society" (Woolman's *Journal*, Chapter IX) Do you suppose that those who preach a gospel of wealth are wrong? "Blest are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven!"

Calling People to Christ

The early simplicity testimony (insistence upon plain north country dress, the refusal of 'hat honor' before superiors, the use of "thee" and "thou" when addressing a single person) had one purpose: to assault the prideful class consciousness of seventeenth century English society. The testimony of simplicity was a way of living out the truth that God "was no respecter of persons;" a way of calling each person to repentance from participation in an oppressive way of life.

The early Quaker preachers called Christians to "turn to that which rips you up, and lays you naked and bare before the Lord God, from whom you cannot hide yourselves. And to the Light of Christ come to be tried and searched..." (Margaret Fell). This internal tribulation was for them a personal experience of the War of the Lamb. As they submitted to it, they came to that city which was lit by the Light of Christ (Revelation 21:23). Often their greatest struggles were giving up accustomed social conventions such as hat honor, elegant dress, etc. In yielding to a life of true simplicity, they found inward peace and new spiritual power. In turn, their living out of the "testimonies" brought others to a spiritual crisis. Outward simplicity was a living tool in the war of the Lamb.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Friends realized that hat honor, plain dress and speech were no longer serving an evangelical function and they were abandoned. Without falling into legalism, is there a way that we, as individuals and as a Society, can again bear a testimony against the oppressive materialism of our nation? What do you hear the Spirit saying to the churches?

A Life of Joy

Time and again, missionaries and others return from places

of service, saying that living without all the stimulation and luxury which we take so much for granted, allowed them to recover a sense of "what is really important." This is a goal of simplicity.

Simplicity is not poverty. In poverty, people are deprived of things that they need, and life becomes a desperate scramble to survive. The Bible counts the materially poor as the victims of oppression. But the rich, too, can be caught by a spirit of poverty. Someone asked J.D. Rockefeller how much money he thought would be enough. "A little bit more," was his response.

Simplicity, as the Bible study shows, is grounded instead in a spirit of abundance: the confidence that our loving Father will provide for our needs. That frees us to live a life of joyful abandon to God's will. "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:11-13).

Simplicity: Taking Hold

Dethrone Money

(These suggestions come from Richard Foster's books.)

1. Go through the Bible and underline all the teachings on money.
2. Examine your feelings about money. Is it love, hate, fear?
3. Make a family budget. Start by accounting for how you actually spend your money over the course of a month. Evaluate. Where should adjustments be made? Never go into debt for ordinary expenses. Plan to increase giving.
4. Gather a support group of some kind.
5. Pray to dethrone money. When you desire something, first ask God to send it to you. If it comes, celebrate; if not consider again if you should purchase or do without.

Sharing

1. Consider tithing. Out of 39 U.S. denominations, Friends rank 29th in per capita giving to our Meetings (1985 *Church Financial Statistics, NCC*).
2. Share through FUM's world-wide ministries. Did you know that approximately 2/3 of the members of FUM are Third World Christians? (Read 1 Corinthians 16:13.)
3. The Fourth Friends World Conference, held in 1967, asked Friends to give 1% of their after tax income to help people in poorer countries help themselves. FWCC's Right Sharing of the World's Resources project administers this fund. Write P.O. Box 1797, Richmond, IN 47375 for information.

Individual Commitment

Use the "Commitment" below as the basis for forming a support group within the Meeting for those who wish to explore economic discipleship. Such groups should be long on listening and prayer, short on advice giving, and compassionate about the individual needs and callings of each family.

The Commitment of Economic Responsibility

I recognize that the earth is a gift of God, and that I am called to cherish, nurture, and provide loving stewardship of the earth's resources.

I affirm the Lordship of Christ over all of life, recognizing that he preached woe to the rich, asked that we lay not up for ourselves treasures on earth, and commanded that we pour ourselves out for the hungry, naked, sick, and imprisoned.

Through the power of the Spirit, and with the strength that comes from Christian community, I will seek to conform my economic life to the will of Christ.

Specifically

1. I will seek to follow the example, teachings, and guidance of Jesus Christ in all my decisions about personal possessions and consumption.

2. I commit myself to live a life of creative and joyful simplicity and ecological responsibility, continually evaluating my standard of living in relation to my genuine needs and those of others.

3. I declare my solidarity with all people who are hungry, poor, and oppressed, and will share my personal resources with them.

4. I commit myself to work for the reform and renewal of the Christian church in the United States, one which is less enmeshed in its property and possessions, and whose abundance is available for the needs of the world's poor.

5. I commit myself to join others in bringing about a more just global society in which all people have full access to the needed resources for their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth.

6. I commit myself to occupational accountability, evaluating the effects of my labor on human needs and well-being.

7. I commit myself to the creation of a radically new moral atmosphere, so that leadership in the church and the world may be able to make critical and costly decisions for human good.

(name)

(date)

(Christian version of the Shakertown Pledge, written by Evangelicals for Social Action in 1974.)

QUAKER QUOTES

Iowa Yearly Meeting, *Queries*, 1978:

Do you observe simplicity and moderation in your manner of living? ...

Do you avoid such undue expansion of your business as to endanger your personal integrity? Are you truthful and honest in your business transactions, punctual in fulfilling your promises, and prompt in the payment of your debts?

George Fox, "The Line of Righteousness, *Epistle* 200, 1661:

He that covets to be rich in the things of this world, falls into many snares, and hurtful lusts. And therefore let him that buys, or sells, or possesses, or uses this world, be as if he did not....For, friends, if ye be not faithful in the outward treasure, and outward mammon, who will trust you with the true treasure?

George Fox, *Epistle* 131, 1656:

And take heed of striving about earthly things, which is the unredeemed part, that is out of the paradise and the garden of God;...And after that riches increase, take heed of setting your hearts upon them, lest they become a curse and a plague to you. For when ye were faithful at the first, the world would refrain from you, and not have commerce with you; but after, when they saw ye were faithful and just in things, and righteous and honest in your tradings and dealings, then they came to have commerce and trade with you the more, because they know ye will not cozen them, nor cheat them; then ye came to have greater trading, double than ever ye had, and more than the world. But there is the danger and temptation to you, of drawing your minds into your business, and clogging them with it; so that ye can hardly do any thing to the service of God, but there will be crying, my business, my business; and your minds will go into the things, and not over the things; and so therein ye do not come into the image of God...And then, if the Lord God cross you, and stop you by sea and land, and take your goods and customers from you, that your minds should not be cumbered; then that mind that is cumbered, will fret, being out of the power of God.

John Woolman, *Journal*, 1774:

The increase of business became my burden; for though my natural inclination was toward merchandise, yet I believed truth required me to live more free from outward cumber; and there was now a strife in my mind between the two. In this exercise my prayers were put up to the Lord, who graciously heard me, and gave me a heart resigned to his holy will. Then I lessened my outward business, and, as I had opportunity, told my customers of my intentions....

John Woolman, *A Plea for the Poor*:

The rising up of a desire to obtain wealth is the beginning; this desire being cherished, moves to action; and riches thus gotten please self; and while self has a life in them it desires to have them defended. Wealth is attended with power, by which bargains and proceedings contrary to universal righteousness are supported; and hence oppression, carried on with worldly policy and order, clothes itself with the name of justice and becomes like a seed of discord in the soul. And as a spirit which wanders from the pure habitation prevails, so the seeds of war swell and sprout and grow and become strong until much fruit is ripened....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....A day of outward distress is coming, and Divine love calls to prepare against it.

Lynn Peery, *The Advocate*, Nov-Dec, 1985:

One young Friend from Mexico commented to me [at the World Gathering of Young Friends, 1985] that she was surprised at how much emphasis North American Friends placed on getting rid of nuclear weapons. She said, "It's important to us, too, of course, but it's a luxury issue to us. We have to spend most of our time taking care of basic needs like food and shelter."

Carol Reilley Urner, "Lazarus at Our Gates," *Quaker Life*, May, 1986:

I think now that Jesus told us a simple truth in the parable of Lazarus. Of course, God loves even the rich, but if we close our gates to the poor and hold our riches to ourselves we will cut ourselves off from the spirit of love and truth. Even we Quakers can find ourselves shut off from the light, in a dry desert, without the water of life to drink. Jesus showed us the gateway to the Kingdom, and it wasn't through wealth, or rituals, or spiritual exercises. It is through the poorest and the least with whom he himself identified: it is through the naked and the hungry, the broken and oppressed who wait outside our gates.

Thomas R. Kelly, "The Simplification of Life," *A Testament of Devotion*, 1941:

We have mistaken the nature of poverty, and thought it was economic poverty. No, it is poverty of soul, deprivation of God's recreating, loving peace. Peer into poverty and see if we are really getting down to the deepest needs, in our economic salvation schemes. These are important. But they lie farther along the road, secondary steps toward world reconstruction. The primary step is a bold life, transformed and radiant in the glory of God....

Life from the Center is a life of unhurried peace and power. It is simple. It is serene. It is amazing. It is triumphant. It

is radiant. It takes no time, but it occupies all our time. And it makes our life programs new and overcoming. We need not get frantic. He is at the helm. And when our little day is done we lie down quietly in peace, for all is well.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In your personal acquaintance, who has exemplified a life of holy simplicity?
2. Have you had any experience of praying for your material needs? Do you think it is okay to take material concerns to God?
3. How would you contrast "poverty" and "simplicity"?
4. Do you think that we should try to define and live at a "just world standard of living"? If so, what would it be?
5. Are there poor among us/around us? How do we share with them?
6. Even if we are relatively affluent, most of us do not feel that we are in a position to make the big decisions about international trade, the way industry uses energy, etc. Is "simple living" just a guilt trip, that diverts our attention from political change, or do we have personal responsibility?
7. Are there ways our meetings, or our spiritual friends, can help us to live simply?

BIBLE STUDY

The Earth Is the Lord's

Creation From Nothing or Struggle Against Chaos?

Yet God my King is from of old,
working salvation in the midst of the earth.
Thou didst divide the sea by thy might;
thou didst break the heads of the dragons on the waters.
Thou didst crush the heads of Leviathan,
thou didst give him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.

Psalm 74:12-14

In that day the Lord with his hard and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea. (Isaiah 27:1)

These readings are among several that could be cited that are reminiscent of Babylonian and Ugaritic creation epics in which the focus is on the struggle of gods with the chaotic power of the waters and the serpent of the sea, Leviathan.

Genesis 1-2:4a

In Genesis 1-2:4a, God speaks what is into existence. There is no conflict; indeed, on the fifth day, "God created the great sea monsters and every living creature." (Genesis 1:21) After completing the creation, "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good."

In Mesopotamian culture, nature was seen as chaos, at least partly "evil". In Hinduism, nature is seen as holding a veil over reality. Israel struggled against Baal worship to maintain the belief that God was the creator of nature, as opposed to the idea that the forces of nature were themselves sacred. According to the philosophy of scientific determinism, nature and life is the result of blind accident.

Do you experience the world as "good" or "chaos" or "as a veil" or as "sacred in itself" or as "blind accident"? What has brought you to see the world this way?

How does the Biblical doctrine of creation affect Western culture's attitude toward natural science and social change?

The Human Task in the Creation

And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ... The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. (Genesis 2: 8, 15)

In the scriptures, the word, "to keep" is most frequently used in the sense of keeping or observing the commandments of God. What relationship with nature does that imply? What might it mean for those of us who do not till the soil?

Thou hast given [humanity] dominion over the works of thy hands;
thou hast put all things under his feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the sea.

Psalm 8: 6-8

Dominion means rule over. The same word is often applied to one person or group of people ruling over another.

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 7

Goodness of Creation

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To learn the scriptural understanding of God as creator of goodness, and humanity's responsibility to the creation.
2. To understand the Friends historic position and some activities in the areas of science and business.
3. To consider the impact of technology upon God's creation and our responsibility to it.

Teaching the Lesson

Open with the Quaker Quote by George Fox. Begin the Bible Study, read the scripture passages, and discuss the questions.

Share thoughts from "The Goodness of Creation." Notice how this testimony began for Friends. Introduce the topics of nuclear technology and genetic engineering supplemented with Quotes from the Media.

Move next to the Questions for Discussion. Be open to lead the discussion so that ideas are shared and feelings are not trampled.

Close with William Penn's *Some Fruits of Solitude*, found in Quaker Quotes. Read each one and allow a time of silence between each. Praise God for the goodness of the Creation.

Compare these two descriptions of humanity's responsibility for the creation by brainstorming lists of words or images that come to mind for each.

Which image do you think has had more impact over the course of history? Since the industrial revolution?

Our Responsibility to the Creation

The earth mourns and withers,
the world languishes and withers;
the heavens languish together with the earth.

The earth lies polluted
under its inhabitants;
for they have transgressed the laws,
violated the statutes,
broken the everlasting covenant.

Therefore a curse devours the earth,
and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt...

Isaiah 24: 4-6a

The welfare of the creation is dependent upon the right living of those who dwell within it. This implies that the testimony of the goodness of creation is related to all the other testimonies.

Do you think that Psalm 8 meant that people were to have absolute "dominion" over nature? If what "is" is good, is it right to change or manipulate it? How much? What Biblical principles might limit our dominion?

The Goodness of the Creation

The Friends movement arose at the same time as the explosion of modern science and technological discovery. George Fox's active ministry spanned the period in which the Royal Academy of Science was founded (1666), and Newton published his world changing *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* (1687). The same values of curiosity, truth seeking and suspicion of dogmatic authority which fires scientific inquiry also fires our desire to know things "experimentally" — whether things religious or things of the natural order. Friends have felt that scientific inquiry celebrates the goodness of creation in all of its wonderful complexity and reveals the glory of God. And Friends have been active, in countless ways, in the fields of science and technology to enhance the quality of life.

Friends were active in key advances in the development of the iron industry: producing consumer goods and the first iron bridge. In the biological sciences, Friends made significant contributions and they were active promoters of public health. Root beer, hot chocolate and the Graham cracker were developed by Friends to advance nutrition and provide alternatives to alcohol and caffeine. Friends were called upon by Alexander I of Russia to drain and cultivate the swamplands around St. Petersburg. The nineteenth and early twentieth century Quaker missions programs incorporated education,

health services and industry in an attempt to share the gospel in wholistic ways.

It is only recently that Friends, and the wider society, have begun to realize that technology has a malign side. Under the influence of rational ideology which sees nature only as something to be exploited, technology emerges as a "principality and power", whose mark is a "ruthless drive to establish mastery over the external world" (Henry Sckolimowski).

Technology becomes demonic when those who exercise it have lost their foundation in the doctrine of the goodness of creation. Creation implies a Creator who delights in and cherishes what is made, and by whose permission, alone, the creation may be used. The goodness of creation implies that what *is* must be respected, and that to alter the fundamental structures of creation is to mar something that is intrinsically good. The scientific theory of evolution holds no threat to human happiness, for there is still room in it for the eyes of faith to see the majestic but invisible hand of God. It is the philosophy of determinism, which holds that the world, and we in it, are nothing but the result of the blind process of accidental evolution, that threatens us. It destroys human happiness because it leads to despair that life has purpose or meaning and consequently to passive resignation in the face of evil.

Nuclear technology and the technology of genetic engineering are twin sign-posts for us. Both hold before us tremendous promise: limitless energy and perfection of health and life. Both also show the dangers of unbridled technology. Nuclear technology — civilian or military, alters the very structure of matter in the interest of power. As a result, we experience the danger of the destruction of life itself, whether it be from the unanswerable problem of the disposal of nuclear wastes or from the holocaust. Genetic engineering has uncovered the secret of life. Now we have unanswerable questions about what the results of creating new forms of life will be. With the ability to manipulate "evolution" through the new technology of recombinant DNA, (gene splicing) we face profound questions of how to, and if we should at all, determine what is an "acceptable quality of life." Can it be purely accident that this assault on the "tree of life" coincides with the development of the technology of the nuclear "flaming sword"?

How do we bear our testimony to the goodness of creation in the crisis days of the end of the twentieth century? As a community of faith, we have hardly begun to seek God's mind on this. The way forward is pointed out to us by those among our number who have, at great personal sacrifice, renounced positions in industry which seemed to them to lead to creation's destruction. Others have devoted themselves to the positive task set by the appropriate technologies. Yet others remind us that demonic technology is fueled by pride that demands control over existence and covetousness requiring ever increasing energy in-put. They point us again to the importance of our testimony of simplicity. In face of the world's despair and pride, we need to celebrate our testimony to the goodness of creation, and to help one another to fulfill our appointed role as care-takers and stewards of nature's beauty.

Quotes From the Media

"The central issue in technology has been and still is the proposition that any technological capability which develops should be implemented without restraint of human discretion.... Technological capability must be rendered accountable to human life and to the sovereignty of the Word of God...." William Stringfellow, *Sojourners*, October, 1984.

"As long as we do not know the risks, as long as we do not know the meaning of what is being done, we must not do it...."

"When the risk generated becomes well nigh inevitable and totally irreparable, the action must not be undertaken..." Jacques Ellul, *Sojourners*, July, August, 1982.

"Genetic change is not basically immoral. It takes place all the time, naturally. What man can do [with the technology of recombinant DNA], however, is make sure that these changes are no longer random in the gigantic genetic lottery in nature.... Instead, he can control the changes to produce better individuals." --Biologist, James Bonner, quoted in Ted Howard and Jeremy Rifkin, *Who Should Play God?*, 1977, p. 21.

"How much do we need recombinant DNA? Fine, we can do without it. We have lived with famine, virus and cancer, and we can continue to." Dr. David Baltimore, quoted in Rifkin, *ibid.* p. 31-2.

"To be men we must be in control. That is the first and last ethical word." Dr. Joseph Fletcher, professor of Medical Ethics at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, quoted in Rifkin, *ibid.*, p. 21.

"No newborn infant should be declared human until it has passed certain tests regarding its genetic endowment and... if it fails these tests it forfeits the right to live." Nobel Laureate, Sir Francis Crick, 1974, quoted in Rifkin, *ibid.* p. 81.

"How does one begin to evaluate a technology which will alter the nature of life itself? Who shall have the authority to develop and produce these altered organisms? Should scientists be allowed to proceed with 'pure research,' regardless of its ominous foreseeable applications? Should the American *laissez faire* attitude toward business dictate that industry patent and market new life forms unhampered? Should decisions about the research be made solely by scientists and industry following the dictates of what can be done without the insights of the church regarding what should be done?" Nancy L. McCann, *Sojourners* April 1977.

QUAKER QUOTES

George Fox, 1648, *Journal* (Ni:25):

And one morning, as I was sitting by the fire, a great cloud came over me, and a temptation beset me; but I sat still. And it was said, "All things come by nature"; and the elements and stars came over me so that I was in a manner quite clouded with it.... And as I sat still under it and let it alone, a living hope arose in me and a true voice, which said, "There is a living God who made all things". And immediately the cloud and temptation vanished away, and life rose over it all, and
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my heart was glad, and I praised the living God....

William Penn, *Some Fruits of Solitude*, 1693:

3. The World is certainly a great and stately Volume of natural Things; and may be not improperly styled the Hieroglyphicks of a better: But, alas! how very few Leaves of it do we seriously turn over! This ought to be the Subject of the Education of our Youth, who, at Twenty, when they should be fit for Business, know little or nothing of it.

9. It were Happy if we studied Nature more in natural Things; and acted according to Nature, whose Rules are few, plain and most reasonable.

10. Let us begin where she begins, go her Pace, and close always where she ends, and we cannot miss of being good Naturalists.

12. And it would go a great way to caution and direct People in their Use of the World, that they were better studied and known in the Creation of it.

13. For how could Man find the Confidence to abuse it, while they should see the Great Creator stare them in the Face, in all and every Part thereof?

London Yearly Meeting, *Christian Faith and Practice*, # 146, 1959:

No argument can, of itself, prove the existence of God; our grounds for believing that God is, and is loving, come from his revelation of himself in the lives of men and women, all over the world, especially in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in the repeated revelations received by the Christian church. Once we have acknowledged this, natural science has an immense amount to tell us about the nature of our loving God's creative activity....

There is thus a profound affinity between the scientific approach to truth, and that of the Society of Friends. The Quaker concept of the continuing individual and corporate revelation is wholly consistent with the spirit behind scientific research in so far as in both, the bold personal adventure is tempered by humility in the face of individual fallibility and by the necessity for sharing experience with others.

Arthur Raitrick, *Friends in Science and Industry*:

The insistence upon simplicity of living, frugality and integrity, provided a character ideally suited to the development of a technical industry where considerable periods of experiment with little return, must be expected, and where speculation was to be avoided.... Where the iron-masters of the southern counties [of England] were making cannon and gunshot...., the Quaker turned his attention to cast iron pans, ... and sicles...

Marian Baker teacher of ecology/biological studies in New Hampshire *Quaker Life*, September, 1986:

The USGS (United States Geological Survey) has written reports (1984) that indicate that they do not really know what will happen when radioactive waste is put into granite rock... To experiment in anyone's backyard with such deadly material is to take a risk for both people and the rest of creation. The U.S. is now planning to do its experimenting in Manitoba, Canada.... Stewardship of the earth was one of the first commandments mentioned in the Bible.... Have we forgotten the Lord in our race for more power?

Jim Hoeksema, instructor, Industrial Technology Dept., William Penn College, Iowa 1987:

Developing nations do not need U.S. technology. In most cases it actually produces detrimental effects.... What they need is... an atmosphere where their own technology can be developed.... Technology transfer leads to an atrophy of the inventive process. The emasculation of indigenous innovation encourages technological dependence rather than development.... As hard as it is to admit, in a different culture Americans are the ignorant ones when it comes to what is appropriate.... The majority of American technology transfer disasters are not due to self-serving corporations or governmental posturing, although such cases abound. More often they are due to arrogant ignorance... It seems to me far more beneficial to develop thought processes than to transfer facts.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you think that Friends approach to religious Truth is compatible with the search for scientific truth? How do we find God revealed in the natural order?

2. In the field of genetics, there are terribly difficult ethical questions. Already amniocentesis (analysis of amniotic fluid taken from a womb) is able to determine the sex of a baby and the presence of over 70 genetic disorders. The knowledge gained leads to difficult decisions: some would argue that a Downs Syndrome child should be aborted, others that someone who will contract cancer in mid-life or even a child of the "wrong" sex should be aborted.

Ninety percent of newborns now undergo genetic screening for such serious mental diseases as PKU (which can be treated by diet, if caught early enough). Artificial insemination of humans already allows for some "gene screening". In the (near?) future, the technology of recombinant DNA (gene splicing), will make it possible to rearrange human gene structures. There are obvious benefits possible in terms of health. One early health benefit is likely to be a genetic cure for diabetes and the possibilities are endless. However, there are equal dangers to this technology. As new life forms are created, there are uncertain public health risks. There is also the problem of "eugenetics"— decision-making by society about what quality of human life is acceptable.

"If it can be done, it should be done" seems to be the Western society's motto with regard to technological progress.

Can we agree on any guidelines for Friends involved with genetic engineering, either as scientists or as patients?

3. Are there broader guidelines that we can agree on to help us bear our testimony to the goodness of creation in the midst of today's technological explosion?

4. Through missions and service, Friends and others have been involved in technology transfer to less developed countries. Is this ever appropriate and if so how? (See quote by Jim Hoeksema.)

BIBLE STUDY

The Council on Intoxicants

It will soon become apparent that proof-texts abound for both sides of the question of whether the Christian testimony on intoxicants should be total abstinence or moderation. Therefore, we have decided to call a Council, like the one recorded in Acts 15, to decide the matter. Just as Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem to get a ruling on the issue of circumcisions, so we will appeal to the apostles and elders for a decision about intoxicants.

We need a few volunteers to join the two adversarial groups. The first is the "Glorious Freedom of the Children of God" group, taking their slogan from Romans 8:21. The second is the "Filled With The Spirit" group, taking their slogan from Ephesians 5:15-17. EVERYONE ELSE comprises the "Apostles and Elders" group. The class leader takes the role of James, the chief elder.

Allow the two groups 5-7 minutes to review their positions. The Glorious Freedom group should open with a 1-3 minute presentation of its position. The Filled With The Spirit group should respond with a 1-3 minute rebuttal. From here on, let there be open discussion.

At an appropriate time, not less than ten minutes before the close of the class period, James should draw the discussion together to minute the decision of "the apostles and the elders, with the whole church..." (Acts 15:22). The different groups may, if they wish, drop their roles for this portion of the exercise. Write this minute, expressing what "seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us" on the issue of whether or not to require total abstinence from intoxicants.

What follows are some key proof-texts and references for the two groups. They should feel free to go beyond what is presented here.

Glorious Freedom Group References

Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now" (John 2:7-10).

"Hear me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a man which by going into him can defile him; but the things which come out of a man are what defile him..." (Thus he declared all foods clean.) (Mark 7:14, 15, 19).

Wine drunk in season and temperately
is rejoicing of heart and gladness of soul.
Wine drunk to excess is bitterness of soul,
with provocation and stumbling.
Ecclesiasticus 31: 28-29

See also:

Luke 7: 33-34
Mark 14: 23-25
Psalm 104: 15
1 Timothy 5: 23

Filled with the Spirit Group References

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but

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LESSON 8

Against Substance Abuse

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To consider selected Biblical passages related to substance abuse.
2. To understand alcoholism as a disease, and that a joyous community life is the antidote (see Alcoholics Anonymous: Twelve Steps).
3. To learn what we can do to understand and help those with substance abuse problems.

Teaching the Lesson

Open with the Quaker Quote by Roland Bainton. Then begin with the role play found in the Bible Study. Some of the Quaker Quotes may also be appropriate during the discussion. The Bible Study is structured to take the entire class period.

You might choose to use the Bible Study for a shorter period and then continue with the rest of the material. If so, next consider "Substance Abuse and the Temple of the Holy Spirit." Contrast a life of substance abuse with one led by the Spirit of Christ into a joyous community. Use the "Alcoholics Anonymous: Twelve Steps."

Often our questions are "How can we help?" and "What can I do?" Look at the suggestions in the section, Take Hold.

If you have time left, move to Questions for Discussion. Pick out those appropriate to your class.

Close with question six and pray for any situation shared.

understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs... (Ephesians 5: 15-19a)

Then let us no more pass judgment on one another, but rather decide never to put a stumbling-block or hindrance in the way of a brother. I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but... If your brother is being injured by what you eat you are no longer walking in love. Do not let what you eat cause the ruin of one for whom Christ died... For the kingdom of God does not mean food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit... Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for any one to make others fall by what he eats; it is right not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother stumble (Romans 14: 13-21).

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body (1 Corinthians 6:19).

Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler;
and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.
Proverbs 20:1

If a man should go about and utter wind and lies,
saying, "I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,"
he would be the preacher for this people!
Micah 2:11

See also: Leviticus 10:9, Proverbs 23:29-35, 1 Peter 4, Genesis 9:20-25.

Substance Abuse and the Temple of the Holy Spirit

Most American families know of or have been touched by substance abuse. The church's job is to hold out the hand of love and healing to all who suffer illness, including the disease of alcoholism. Alcoholics are those whose body chemistry is such that they become physically addicted to alcohol. For us to continue to misname a disease a sin is wrong and counterproductive. On the other hand, a society that does not address the causes of a disease with the economic and social repercussions of alcoholism has a moral problem. And when the church condones activity that promotes illness, the church has a moral problem.

Friends have always advised against the use of intoxicants and must maintain that testimony. Substance abuse is grounded in a desperate desire to escape loneliness and life's many other difficulties. Our testimony must be grounded in the experience that the Spirit of Christ leads us into a joyous community life against which the excitement of alcohol and drugs pales. Even more profoundly, our testimony is to the amazing discovery that our bodies have become "a temple of the Holy Spirit" (1

Corinthians 6:19). It follows that we cannot effectively bear a testimony against substance abuse unless our testimony of community is also strong.

Alcoholics Anonymous is uniquely effective because it offers the depths of community so often lacking in the church. It might be a helpful exercise for the non-alcoholics among us to go through the Twelve Steps, substituting the word "temptation" wherever "alcohol" appears. Are we ready to become a community that truly allows the Holy Spirit to make its home among us? What we need to learn from AA is that it is only that depth of community that offers a Godly alternative to the world of substance abuse.

Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps

1. We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understand him.
4. We made a searching, fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of persons we have harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs.

TAKING HOLD

Substance Abuse: Taking Hold

1. Attend open meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, and other citizens' groups dealing with the issue, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving or Women's Christian Temperance Union, to learn about the issue.

2. Alcoholics project the image of being totally in control. Offering to have children join another family for some event, or to stay for a few days "would help both the child and the addict's family. We can always err on the side of being loving and caring." Confidentiality is very important, but to help prevent the alcoholic's isolation you can ask how they're doing. You can also say what you see happening in their life. (Suggestions from Ann Bohan, "Ministering to our Meetings, Pt. VII," Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Religious Education Committee, 1985).

3. Be ready to get help through drug and alcohol treatment centers. AA has the most effective program for helping those with the disease of alcoholism to recover and maintain sobriety.

4. Guidelines for dialogue with adolescents if drinking and/or drug problems surface (Chemical Dependency Program of Reid Memorial Hospital, Richmond, IN):

- A. Be simple and direct as you speak, but proceed openly and smoothly. RUSHED encounters are self-defeating.
- B. Know the facts, as well as you can, but do not try to come across as an "expert."
- C. Be specific. You are zeroing in on the person's DRINKING behavior, not general behaviors and attitudes.
- D. CARE! At every opportunity, communicate your real interest in the young person--whether as parent, relative, teacher, or friends.
- E. Don't be afraid to show your feelings (anger, for example), yet make sure that they are directed at the BEHAVIOR, not the person.
- F. Try to make the confrontation OBJECTIVE, in terms of the behavior. You can be subjective, though, when it comes to your relationship to the person.
- G. Stick to the issue--the problem is drinking. Don't let yourself be led into unrelated or marginal subjects.
- H. Avoid any "I told you so!" inferences.
- I. While the person is still inebriated, do not use arguments or threats to try to make your point. Wait until later/sober to make the confrontation.

- J. Be prepared for excuses, promises of change, accusations that YOU drink (or have other behavior problems), assertions that this is "no big deal," and attempts to switch the subject.

QUAKER QUOTES

William Penn, *No Cross, No Crown*, 1682:

Both reason and religion dictate that when an addiction occurs, this is abuse...Now there are those who say, why should I be prevented by the other's abuse? But using them adds to a general excess. It excites others to continue in their abuse, by giving them an example to imitate.

John Woolman, *Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich*, 1764:

That the Spirits...makes a person unfit for Divine meditation, I suppose will not be denied....I have found that there is a more quiet, calm, and happy way intended for us to walk in.

John Greenleaf Whittier 1807-1892, *The Brewing of Soma*:

So sang the priests. From tent to tent
The soma's sacred madness went,
A storm of drunken joy.
Then knew each rapt inebriate
A winged and glorious birth...
As in that child-world's early year,
Each after age has striven
By music, incense, vigils drear,
And trance, to bring the skies more near
Or lift men up to heaven!
And yet the past comes round again,
And new doth old fulfil;
In sensual transports wild as vain
We brew in many a Christian fane
The heathen Soma still!
Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways.

Odessa Painter Rayle, *Friends missionary Advocate*, May, 1937:

Alcohol causes disease and shortens life...Medical science says you must abstain if you would realize the highest degree of moral and physical efficiency...Tobacco is a slow poison...Drug addiction is another health problem... On with the war on all narcotics.

Roland Bainton in *Alcohol Education Digest*, July-September 1958:

These two principles, that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and that the strong should accommodate themselves to the weak, are the biblical grounds on which I base my practice and teaching of total abstinence.

Elizabeth Newby, *A Migrant with Hope*, 1966:

Practically everyone I knew at college was taking drugs or knew where to get them...The temptation to join the crowd and take something to erase my problems, if even for a short while, was great; but I knew that once the power of the drug wore off, the problems would still be there....There were numerous times when I was so low that nothing in life seemed to matter. Only with God's help was I able to survive those times of temptation and to reject the lower paths I could have followed.

Maeve S. (AA member), *Friends Journal*, June 15, 1969:

I am an alcoholic and a Quaker. And...let me hasten to add that thanks to God and A.A. I have been sober for 26 years... Inevitably, there are active alcoholics among Friends. For the sake of those alcoholics, as well as their families, my hope and prayer is that Friends will cease hewing to the long-outmoded concept that alcoholism is a shameful thing, a moral issue. Is tuberculosis a moral issue? Is cancer?... The point is simply to make an effort to understand.

Sabron Newton, [to whom thanks for use of her extensive collection of Quaker quotations on this subject], *Quaker Life*, April, 1983:

The U.S. has also been experiencing a rise in alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems... Quakers worry in public about the diversion of public funds from butter to guns, plowshares to swords. We could also properly wonder in public how this drain on public resources affects the quality of life around us. How many of our Quaker homes can claim to be completely untouched by the disappointments and tragedies these figures suggest? ... We may have tried so hard to avoid projecting a self-righteous image that we have let the rest of the world imagine that we no longer believe that drinking raises moral and ethical issues...

New England Yearly Meeting, Advices (1986):

In view of the evils arising from the use of tobacco and intoxicating drinks and from the abuse of drugs, Friends are advised to consider whether they should refrain from using them, from offering them to others, and from having any share in their manufacture or sale. We should not let the claims of

good fellowship or the fear of seeming peculiar influence our decision.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you believe that Friends should totally abstain from alcohol and intoxicants as a matter of Christian discipline, or that we should practice moderation in these things?

2. Does our community of faith know the importance of celebration, as suggested in Ephesians 5:19ff?

3. Friends were among the leaders of the prohibition movement. How do you evaluate the experience of "prohibition"? What form should our testimony on substance abuse take today?

4. If the fact that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit lies behind the testimony on substance abuse, the issue goes far beyond alcohol, drugs and tobacco. What about coffee, tea and other caffeine products? Chemical additives in foods? Sedentary lifestyles or, alternatively, the stress of overwork? How are we honoring these temples that have been given into our care?

5. Try going through the Twelve Steps, substituting the word "temptation" for "alcohol." Would you like to belong to a community that practiced these Twelve Steps?

6. Most families have been touched at some point by the pain of substance abuse. Those who wish might indicate their experience so that the group could unite in prayer for the situation. Please be aware of the importance of confidentiality.

Women's Place

The Good News

Genesis 2-3 presents a vision of life as God intended it to be before it was corrupted by sin. *Adam* (Hebrew for human being) was created from the earth (*adamah*) to tend the Garden of Eden. God saw the person's loneliness and said, "It is not good for the *adam* to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him..." Here is no talk of domination or superiority; God, too, is called "helper." As God created *adam* out of *adamah*, so God brought a woman (*ishah*) out of the flesh of the man (*ish*). Some people see in the story of the "rib" the sexist notion that woman is but an afterthought meant to satisfy male desires. Look at the structure of the language: what is the relationship between people and the earth, and between the man and the woman?

Sin enters the picture in the form of the serpent and the forbidden fruit. In the story in Genesis 3, who is blamed and who is punished for this disobedience? Margaret Fell points out that the scripture places responsibility on both the man and woman: "and 'she did eat, and gave to her Husband, and he did eat' also, and so they were both tempted into... disobedience...."

The domination of women by men is a curse resulting from the Fall, "To the woman [God] said... Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you" (Genesis 3:16). Jesus Christ brings salvation by restoring us to the kind of life God had intended "at the beginning" (See Matthew 19). This is why the Christian community states in Acts 2:17-18 that Joel's prophecy has been fulfilled: "Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy." Friends' historic testimony to the equality of men and women is significant as a sign that Christ continues to empower us to live a life redeemed from the curse of patriarchy.

If this is all true, what is the meaning of Ephesians 5:21-33, which is so frequently cited to command that a husband should rule over his wife? What does it mean to be subject to one another?

The Objection from Paul

Citing 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12, certain churches prohibit women from speaking in public meetings or from teaching or holding positions of authority over men.

1 Timothy 2, reads, "Let Women learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a Woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the Man, but to be in silence..." Fell points out that the context for Paul's statement is a discussion of the need for simplicity and sobriety by the women of that church. The Apostle is speaking to such...as were not come to wear modest apparel, and...sobriety...not to usurp authority over the Man..."

Do you agree that women (or men) should not be allowed to speak in worship if their lives do not show the simplicity and sobriety that comes from dwelling in Christ?

Margaret Fell points out that in 1 Corinthians 14 "all was in confusion speaking together; Therefore [Paul] saith, 'If any man speak in an unknown Tongue, let it by two...and let one Interpret; but if there be no Interpreter, let him keep silence in the Church.' Here the Man is commanded to keep silence as well as the Woman, when they are in confusion and out of order." She goes on to ask, "And what is all this to Womens Speaking? Had not the Revelation and Spirit of God poured upon them;...for if he had stopt Womens praying or prophesying, why doth he say, 'every Woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head?...'" (1 Corinthians 11:3,4) In condemning confusion and disorder, Paul (and Margaret Fell) imply that there is a positive

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 9

Equality

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To learn the scriptural basis of the Equality Testimony.
2. To study the three major areas where the Equality Testimony impacts modern life — ministry, language, and family life.
3. To consider how queries concerning the Equality Testimony affect one's monthly, and yearly meeting.

Teaching the Lesson

Begin by looking at the chart with the partial list of Quaker Women Making History. As you begin to study the Bible Study, you may notice that some students have already made up their minds. Pray for openness to Christ's teaching.

Read the first two Quaker Quotes by Margaret Fell and George Fox. Move next to "Men and Women's Equality Today." Consider each of the three areas of concern — ministry, language, and family life. Use the Facts and Figures section, Richmond Declaration and Quaker Quotes as you discuss each section.

Lastly, read the Queries for Discussion and Consideration which are taken from several sources. How does your meeting answer these queries? Quaker Quotes from Lela Chance, Canby Jones and Ann Proescholt-Shaw are helpful here.

Close by again reading Acts 2:17-18. Pray for Christ's leading in your meeting and among your students.

criterion for speaking in worship. Can you name it?

Finally, Fell cites the preaching and teaching work of many women acknowledged as co-workers in the gospel by Paul and how women were the first to bring the news of Jesus' resurrection to the other disciples. "What would have become of the Redemption of the whole Body of Mankind, if they had not believed the Message that the Lord Jesus had sent by these Women?....And so let this serve to stop that opposing Spirit that would limit the Power and Spirit of the Lord Jesus...."

Does your Meeting quench the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) of its ministers, whether male or female?

(Quotations have been taken from the 1666 tract written by Margaret Fell, titled, *Womens Speaking*,.... which is available from the Quaker Hill Bookstore for \$1.00)

Men and Women's Equality Today

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the testimony to the fact that the Spirit of God works with equal freedom in either male or female. The Bible Study in this session shows how deeply rooted this testimony is in the gospel. Friends have been leaders in the movement for equal rights for women, but for us the issue goes far beyond that. Equality for men and women means not "quenching the Spirit" and thus separating ourselves from the life of God. The "cloud of witnesses" of outstanding women Friends ministers encourages us to further faithfulness.

Trish Edwards-DeLancey, pastor and adult curriculum editor for FUM, helped identify these three areas where the testimony to the equality of men and women impacts us today:

Ministry

For over 330 years, Friends have recognized women as equal partners in ministry. But, since the adoption of the pastoral system, the vast majority of recorded ministers have been men. (See "Facts and Figures.") This coincided with the abandonment of separate Monthly and Yearly Meetings of Men and Women Friends which had ensured a place for leadership of Friends of both sexes. One of the tasks of the original Meeting for Sufferings was to release from child care those mothers who had a call to ministry. Our Meetings have a responsibility both to encourage and to enable women in ministry.

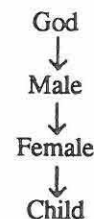
Language

Early Friends understood the power of language. The "plain speech" (e.g., "thee" rather than "you" to superiors) was a linguistic attack on the hierarchical structures of society. Friends were usually careful to speak inclusively of "men and women" when referring to the community of believers. Terms such as "clerk," (instead of "chairman") and the disuse of titles, also promoted equality. (No more "Miss" and "Mrs." please!) We need to be on guard against a tendency to adopt titles and terms which subtly exclude whole categories of people.

Objection to inclusive language is particularly strong from those who treasure the traditional masculine phrasing in reference to the Divine Spirit. However, the Bible is clear that "God is Spirit." By using both male and female imagery to describe God's interactions with humanity, Scripture is able to convey the richness and depth of the personal relationships possible with God. When we confine our language to just "spirit" or just female or just male, we not only lose this wealth but distort the reality of God. Goddess worship is as likely as patriarch-god worship to dehumanize the worshipper. Both distort the witness of Scripture (e.g. Isaiah 42:14; 66:13). Language is not neutral; it is important that our usage reflect Christ's values, rather than the sexist values of our culture.

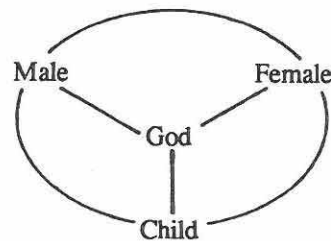
Family Life

Friends understand that each individual's relationship to God must be unmediated; that is, it depends on direct experience. The implications for family life are profound. In the hierarchical model, women and children are placed under the "headship" of the father, like this:



This system fosters oppression. It is a drastic distortion of the Biblical virtue of submission which calls on men to be "head" of the family in the same way in which Jesus Christ, as "head" of the church, submitted to God and became a servant of all.

Friends understanding of family life comes from the Biblical model of mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21) which looks like this:



Here oppression is eliminated, without diminishing the parent's responsibility for the child. Each individual's intimate relationship with God is cherished. That instances of spouse battering and child abuse have been recorded among us highlights the importance of recalling God's perfect way.

It is our faith that the Spirit of God has the power to make a practical difference in how we relate to each other. In fact, we believe that in Christ we are brought into the experience of the Peaceable Kingdom. Equality of women and men is a sign of that happening.

Facts and Figures:

In the World

(Ruth Leger Sivard, *WOMEN...a world survey* (World Priorities: D.C., 1985):

The hourly wages of working women in the manufacturing industry are on an average of three-fourths those earned by men. Women comprise 50 percent of the teachers in primary schools, 31 percent in secondary schools, and 26 percent in higher education. In developing countries, two-thirds of the women over the age of 25 (and about half the men) have never been to school. Both males and females born in developing countries have shorter life expectancy than babies born in developed countries; for males the average life span is 10 years shorter; for females it is 15 years shorter. Although they comprise 50 percent of the world's enfranchised population, women hold no more than 10 percent of the seats in national legislatures.

Among Friends

"Research done (in 1973) by Paula Teague reveals a great disparity between opportunities for men and women among Friends. For example, in the largest American yearly meeting only one percent of all pastors and clerks are women. Other (pastoral) yearly meetings follow closely with one at three percent, two at five percent, and the highest at fifteen percent..."

"Among the FUM yearly meetings which record ministers, the percentage of all recorded persons who are women is similarly low. The highest percentage among the yearly meetings was seventeen percent with several between seven and ten percent..." (Howard Macy, *Let's Be Friends* #33, in *Quaker Life*, September, 1979).

A HISTORICAL SAMPLE

Recording of men and women in New England Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) 1887-1905 (research by Ben Richmond)

	women	men
1887	3	3
1888	0	0
1889	2	6
1890	6	1
1891	3	3
1892	0	2
1893	1	8
1894	1	1
1895	2	1
1896	3	5
1897	3	1
Totals 1887-1897	24 women	31 men

Closing minute of the last session of the NEYM of Women Friends, 1897:

"We have been exhorted to be faithful in our allotted places; especially have we been encouraged to listen to the call to the

ministry that may come to any of us, ever abiding in the vine and drawing our sap from Him."

"Adjourned to meet with men Friends in joint session."

	women	men
1898	0	4
1899	2	1
1900	1	4
1901	1	3
1902	0	1
1903	1	1
1904	0	1
1905	0	1
Totals 1898-1905	5 women	16 men

From the Minutes of the NEYM Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, 1900 (the year prior to adopting the "Uniform Discipline"):

"While we gladly acknowledge the gift of pastors to the Church, we feel the the necessity of the greatest care and watchfulness, lest a misapprehension of the place and duties of a pastor defeat the very purpose for which a pastoral gift was bestowed. No meeting can be held to the glory and in the power of God where His message, even through one of the weakest or most unattractive of His instruments, is oppressed. An ideal Friends meeting is where ministers, elders and congregation at large are all together waiting upon the Lord, each one without regard to official station, in that living relationship to the living Head, as to be able instantly to respond to the Divine call to any manner of service."

QUAKER QUOTES

Margaret Fell, *Womens Speaking*, 1667:

And thus the Lord Jesus hath manifested himself and his Power, without respect of Person; and so let all mouths be stopt that would limit him, whose Power and Spirit is infinite, that is pouring it upon all flesh.

George Fox

Encourage all the women that are convinced, and mind virtue, and love the truth, and walk in it, that they may come up into God's service, that they may be serviceable in their generation and in the Creation....

Sarah Grimke, *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes*:

I ask no favors of my sex. I surrender not our claim to equality. All I ask of our brethren is that they will take their feet from off our necks, and permit us to stand upright on the ground which God has designed for us to occupy.

[quoted in Margaret Hope Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism*]

Lucretia Mott, *Discourse*, 1849:

Let women then go on, not asking favors, but claiming as right the removal of all hinderances...so that she may enter profitably into the active business of life...

Esther Frame, *Richmond Conference Minutes*, 1887:

...there is no doubt that in this we need more saving, real, personal salvation, being born of the Spirit, washed, sanctified, filled with the Holy Ghost, and walking with God; there is not any one subject that we need to leave before the world more than the privileges the Gospel brings to womankind, and I feel the importance of our maintaining that principle of making no difference between man and woman.

Mary Whital Thomas, *Richmond Conference Minutes*, 1887:

The women in the Society of Friends have a position that is not allowed them by their brethren or given to them by any man. It is given to them by the head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ. This society is the only society that professes that women should have this place and it is organized on that basis, and we are not going to let you forget it.

Richmond Declaration of Faith, 1887:

As it is the prerogative of the Great Head of the church alone to select and call the ministers of His Gospel, so we believe that both the gift and the qualification to exercise it must be derived immediately from Him; and that, as in the primitive church, so now also, He confers spiritual gifts upon women as well as upon men.

Caroline Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, 1890:

In Friends' meetings also, from the fact that every one is free to speak, one hears harmonies and correspondences between very various utterances such as are scarcely to be met with elsewhere....The free admission of the ministry of women, of course, greatly enriches this harmony. I have often wondered whether some of the motherly counsels I have listened to in our meeting would not reach some hearts that might be closed to the masculine preacher.

Lela Elliot Gordon Chance, *Repentant Rebel*, 1920:

In three of the five pastorates I have held, there were men who confessed to me that they had been very uneasy about calling a woman to serve their meeting. They had doubted I could give desirable leadership; but having sat under my ministry for a few months, they had become convinced that

my coming to them was right and they had been wrong in their fears of a woman in the pulpit.

Canby Jones, speaking to Iowa Yearly Meeting pastors, 1966:

Friends were the first to recognize the rightful place of women in the Gospel ministry; but now we are in danger of being the first to lose them.

Ann Proescholdt-Shaw, pastor, Xenia Friends Church, speech 1986:

Women in ministry, whether pastoral or non-pastoral, whether paid or not paid, have a special blessing. We have a solidarity with the world's marginal people....For women... our ministry will be strengthened and blessed as we can minister out of who we truly are, out of our femaleness, our woundedness, our humanity.

Indiana Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice*

Friends recognize no distinction in the rights, privileges and responsibilities of members because of education, race or sex.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do Friends recognize the fruits of the Spirit and encourage personal and public ministry of women of all ages in our meetings?
2. Do Friends open places for these women to exercise their gifts of ministry, releasing them financially in either pastorates or other creative ministry positions?
3. Do Friends today, as we have in the past, recognize, record and encourage, besides pastoral gifts, a variety of gifts of ministry such as teaching, counseling, administration, youth or music ministries of both women and men? (1-3 from an article by Linda Selleck, *Quaker Life*, June, 1986)
4. Do we provide the funds and childcare that may be necessary to enable women to travel in the ministry?
5. Do we recruit women for pastoral training and grant scholarships to make this possible?
6. Are we mindful of the needs of women when designing and funding service projects?
7. Do we insure equal access to scholarships and other educational opportunities?
8. Do we recognize the seeds of inequality in our relationships among family members?

9. Do we take action to develop family life which will nurture the highest potential of all the members, regardless of gender?

(4-9 excerpts from the report of an interest group at the FWCC Triennial, 1982)

10. Are we encouraging men Friends to undertake their share of the clerkships and other time-consuming "volunteer" positions which, in some of our Yearly Meetings, are falling more and more on women?

(from a suggestion by Jane Snyder, North Pacific Yearly Meeting)

11. Would separate meetings of men and women Friends encourage the development of leadership among women and nurturing capacity among men?

QUAKER WOMEN MAKING HISTORY

PAST PRESENT FUTURE

1600 1650 1700 1750 1800 1850 1900 1950 2000

ELIZABETH HOOTEN 1600-1672
 MARGARET FELL 1614-1702
 MARY FISHER 1623-1698
 ANN AUSTIN
 ELIZABETH HARRIS
 ELIZABETH FLETCHER
 ELIZABETH LEAVENS HOLME
 JANE HOLMES
 JANE WAUGH
 DOROTHY WAUGH
 LOVEDAY HAMBLY
 ISABEL BUTTERY
 MARY PENINGTON
 ESTHER BIDDLE
 JUDITH ZINSPINNING
 ANN AUDLAND CAMM 1627-1705
 SARAH BLACKBERRY
 KATHERINE EVAWS
 SARAH CHEVERS
 ANN DOWNER WHITEHEAD
 BARBARA BLANGDONE
 ELIZABETH CLAYPOOLE
 REBECCA TRAVERS

ORIGINAL PUBLISHERS OF TRUTH



MARY DYER 1660-1680 MARTYR FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
 HANNAH CARPENTER 1645-1728
 ELEANOR SMITH 1653-1708
 BETTY CALDWELL 1680-1757
 ELIZABETH HADDON 1682-1762
 ELIZABETH ASHBRIDGE 1713-1775
 MARY PEMBERTON 1704-1778
 PHEBE TRIMBLE 1717-1784
 SUSANNA LIGHTFOOT 1720-1781

BORN IN ENGLAND OR WALES OR BORN IN COLONIES

MINISTERS IN PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING



PRISON VISITOR · REFORMER
 TRAVELLING MINISTER
 ANTI-SLAVERY · ACTIVIST · WOMEN
 MINISTER · ANTI-SLAVERY · WOMEN
 TRAVELLING MINISTER · PSYCHIC
 VISITED PRES. LINCOLN TO PRAY FOR PEACE
 NON-RESISTANT
 TEACHER · RACIAL EQUALITY · ACTIVIST
 TEACHER · PUBLISHER
 ANTI-SLAVERY · ACTIVIST · WOMEN'S RIGHTS
 PACIFIST · ENCOURAGED WAR RESISTANCE
 REFORMER · WRITER · WOMEN
 MINISTER · MISSIONARY WITH ELI
 PACIFIST · ACTIVIST · ANTI-WAR ACTIVITY
 ANTI-SLAVERY SPEAKER · ACTIVIST
 MINISTER · RELIEF FOR FREED SLAVES · PRISONS
 TRAVELLING MINISTER IN WEST WITH ROBERT
 MINISTER · IOWA AND CALIFORNIA WITH JOEL
 TEACHER · ABOLITION · WOMEN
 ASTRONOMER
 WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE · LEADER
 HORSE AND BUGGY DOCTOR · KANSAS
 PHILANTHROPIST
 MISSIONARY IN NANKING, CHINA
 ABOLITION · WOMEN · EDUCATION
 MINISTER · EVANGELIST · WEST STATES
 MINISTER · NATIVE AMERICAN CONCERN ·
 TEMPERANCE WORK · "KANSAS CYCLOPE"
 BRITISH MISSIONARY TO INDIA
 UNDERGROUND RAILROAD · SCHOOLS
 WAR RELIEF · NURSING · PRISONS · SCHOOLS



MINISTER · WRITER · SEEKER
 MEDICAL MISSIONARY IN CHINA
 WRITER · THEOLOGIAN · MYSTIC
 SCHOOLS FOR BLACK PEOPLE IN SOUTH
 REFORMER · PACIFIST · WCTU · WOMEN
 MINISTER IN WESTERN MEETINGS
 WAR NURSE · TEACHER · WOMEN
 MISSIONARY TO INDIA
 MEDICAL DOCTOR · NEW ENGLAND
 SWARTHMORE COLLEGE DEAN
 MINISTER · TEACHER · WRITER
 PEACEMAKER · NOBEL PRIZE · WILPF · TEACHER
 MISSIONARY TO CUBA, WITH SYLVESTER
 MINISTER · COUNSELOR · FRIEND
 AFSC VIENNA QUAKER CENTER
 REFUGEE HOSTEL · OUTREACH
 SCHOLAR · FEMINIST · PEACEMAKER
 SPIRITUAL LEADER · COUNSELOR
 AFSC RELIEF ADM. WWII
 FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE
 WRITER
 ATTORNEY · SUFFRAGE · E.R.A.
 LEADER · EDUCATOR · MINISTER
 EDITOR · WRITER · POET
 WRITER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
 WRITER · TEACHER · WOMEN
 FGC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
 BRITISH FRIENDS RELIEF SERVICE
 SCULPTOR
 PHYSICIST · PEACEMAKER
 AFSC · WILPF · FOR · WAR RELIEF
 TEACHER · AFSC WORK IN VIETNAM

TRAVELLING MINISTER
 RADICAL LEADER · ACTIVIST
 PREACHER · SANDY SPRING
 TRAVELLING MINISTER
 MINISTER · WOMEN'S RIGHTS
 TRAVELLING MINISTER
 MINISTER · ANTI-SLAVERY
 MINISTER · COUNSELOR
 MINISTER · ENGLAND
 "FREE QUAKER" · FLAGMAKER ?
 LIBERAL MINISTER · DISOWNED
 TAX REFUSER · ACTIVIST
 MINISTER · ENGLAND
 WRITER · POET
 MINISTER · ENGLAND
 WRITER
 DISOWNED
 RACHEL HICKS 1789-1873
 SARAH GRIMKE 1792-1873
 LUCRETIA MOTT 1793-1880
 ELIZABETH NEWPORT 1796-1872
 ELIZA GURNEY 1800-1881
 SARAH PUGH 1800-1884
 PRUDENCE CRANDALL 1803-1889
 JANE JOHNSON 1803-1884
 ANGELINA GRIMKE 1805-1879 DISOWNED
 ELIZABETH BUFFAM CHACE 1806-1899
 MARTHA COFFIN WRIGHT 1806-1875
 SYBIL JONES 1808-1873
 ANN BRANSON 1808-1891
 ABBY KELLEY FOSTER 1811-1887 DISOWNED
 ELIZABETH COMSTOCK 1814-1891
 SARAH LINDSEY
 HANNAH BEAN
 MARGARET JONES BURLEIGH
 MARIA MITCHELL 1818-1889
 SUSAN B. ANTHONY 1820-1906
 MARY KNAPP BENNETT M.P.
 ANNA JEANES 1822-1907
 ESTHER BUTLER
 EMILY HOWLAND 1827-1929
 MARY MOON MEREDITH
 MARGARETTA WALTON 1829-1904
 MARY SIBBITT
 RACHEL METCALFE 1829-1898
 LAURA HAVILAND -1898
 SARAH SMITH
 CAROLINE TALBOT
 DRUSCILLA WILSON
 HANNAH WHITTALL SMITH 1832-1911
 LUCY GAYNOR M.D.
 CAROLINE STEPHEN 1834-1909
 MARTHA SCHOFIELD 1839-1916
 HANNAH JOHNSTON BAILEY 1839-1923
 ESTHER FRAME -1920
 CORNELIA HANCOCK 1839-1927
 ESTHER BAIRD
 ABIGAIL GODDARD M.D.
 ELIZABETH POWELL BOND 1841-1926
 JANE RUSHMORE 1864-1958
 EMILY GREEN BALCH 1867-1961
 MAY JONES 1871-1961
 LUCRETIA FRANKLIN 1874-1969
 EMMA CADBURY 1875-1965
 LUELLA FLITCRAFT 1877-1965
 EMILIA FOGELKLOU NORLIND
 RACHEL CADBURY
 1878-1972
 1880-1969
 1884-1971
 -1974
 1885-1966
 1886-1977
 1887-1969
 1887-1972
 1890-1945
 1891-1974
 1893-1973
 1893-1951
 1897-1978
 1903-1971
 1904-1978
 1909-1977
 MARtha TRIMBLE BALDERSTON
 BLANCHE SHAFFER
 EMILY COOPER JOHNSON
 ALICE PAUL
 ANNA BRINTON
 ANNA PETTIT BROOMMELL
 MARJORIE HILL ALLEE
 JANET PAYNE WHITNEY
 AMELIA SWAYNE
 AMY LEWIS
 SYLVIA SHAW JUDSON MASKINS
 KATHLEEN LONSDALE
 EMILY PARKER SIMON
 MARY DENISON STICKNEY

BIBLE STUDY

Good Sex/Bad Sex

Read The Song of Solomon, chapter 5:10-16; and 7:1-9. What are these passages about? Is this pornographic? Why or why not? Do you think this should be in the canon of Scripture?

In the Creation story, the first thing that was "not good" was loneliness. God saw this and said, "It is not good that the person (*adam*) should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:18). Then God made the animals, but this did not fill the void of human loneliness. Then God separated *adam* into man (*ish*) and woman (*ishshah*) (Genesis 2:22). Intimacy, by its very nature, has a sexual dimension. In Genesis 2:24, intimacy finds expression in sexual union. The man and woman join together to "become one flesh." What does the expression, "one flesh" mean to you? What does Paul mean when he says, "Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her?" (1 Corinthians 6:16).

In the Bible, sexual union is not seen merely as a procreative act, but as an expression of intimacy. This dimension of sexuality is expressed in the verb *yada*, "to know." Thus, in Genesis 4:1, "Adam knew Eve." *Yada* is used for the whole continuum of relationships: from human acquaintance (e.g., Genesis 29:5) to the cry of the Psalmist, "O Lord, thou has searched me and known me!" (Psalm 139:1)

Unhappily, sex can also be the expression of destructive and evil relationships. *Yada*, for instance, is the word used in Judges 19:22-28, first for threatened homosexual abuse and later for the act of heterosexual rape which resulted in a woman's murder. In the New Testament, it is interesting that within his lists of sins, Paul includes both greed and sexual immorality in each of these passages: Romans 1:27-29; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Ephesians 5:3; and Colossians 3:5. What do greed and sexual immorality have in common? How are they related to each other?

When the Pharisees came to Jesus to ask his opinion about divorce, Jesus' response was to recall for them how God had intended things "from the beginning" (Matthew 19:4). In Eden, Adam and Eve lived together "naked and unashamed." What does that phrase mean to you? Is it possible for people today to live in that quality of life? How?

Testimony on Sexuality

When God made us male and female, sexuality became central to our spiritual beings. To one degree or another, it is a feature of all our relationships. It is an energizing drive toward all sorts of creativity and love. The Bible celebrates sexual pleasure in voluptuous poetry, and speaks of the possibility of man and woman being together "naked and without shame."

Scripturally, sexual intercourse creates a mystical bond which can never be broken. Because of the mystery of "becoming one flesh," we equate genital sex with life-long marriage relationships. The increasing danger of sexually transmitted disease merely underlines the importance of the spiritual rules of chastity and fidelity.

Friends have always tried to uphold the goodness of sex in a way that affirms mutuality in relationship. This harkens back to the Biblical concern that sexuality should be a reflection of spiritual intimacy. For Friends this found expression in the traditional Friends marriage. The man and the woman speak their simple vows directly to each other in freedom and equality without a priest as intermediary. The extraordinary freedom of women to follow God's call into service outside the family is the natural consequence of this testimony. Where husbands have been reluctant to acknowledge their wives' service in the world, meetings have had to elder them, and help shoulder the responsibility for the care of the children. The

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 10

Human Sexuality

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To learn the biblical basis of human sexuality.
2. To study the impact of our world on the Friends Testimony of Sexuality.
3. To consider how your meeting can "uphold the goodness of sex in a way that affirms mutuality in relationships."

Teaching the Lesson

Begin with the Bible Study, opening with the Song of Solomon. Move through the study, discussing the questions as they arise.

Share ideas from the "Testimony on Sexuality." Use the Quaker Quotes to illustrate the Friends position.

Consider if Friends do or should have a modern corporate testimony on human sexuality. Look at the Quaker Quote by Herb Lape and Violence Among Intimates. What does this say about Friends?

Share the Taking Hold suggestions, then consider the Questions for Discussion. Guide the discussion so that ideas are expressed but people are not verbally attacked.

Close with the Quaker Quote by George Fox. Pray for wisdom that each person can know how God is leading them personally regarding this testimony.

testimony on sexual expression is always in the interest of the enhancement of fellowship between equal help-mates.

Porneia is the Greek word for sexual immorality. We encounter *porneia* whenever human sexuality is perverted in such a way that human personhood is undermined. The fruit of *porneia* is loneliness rather than fellowship, death rather than creation, manipulation rather than freedom. Friends need to consider how to affirm our ancient testimony on marriage and sexual expression in the face of today's onslaught of sexism, child and wife abuse, abortion, and pornography.

A personal testimony: while washing dishes in a restaurant in 1976, I was encountered by God. The Light of Christ revealed to me how selfish had been my so-called love in a recently broken relationship. God plainly showed me that my will to have intercourse when I knew that conception would likely have been terminated in abortion, made me a murderer in spirit, if not in fact. This "opening" flew in the face of the "pro-choice" philosophy I then held.

Friends testimony on sexual expression is one with the other testimonies on peace, truth and simplicity. People who have been manipulated, deceived and hurt need to find among us a community of truth, forgiveness and healing where they can begin to discover love that is joyful, pure and innocent of selfish deceit.

Violence Among Intimates

Most violence is committed against family members or intimates rather than against strangers. Judy Brutz and Bron Ingoldsby published an article titled, "Conflict Resolution in Quaker Families" in the February 1984 issue of *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. Taking Illinois Yearly Meeting as their sample, they found that violence in Quaker families seemed to approximate the national average.

1. "Respondents clearly held pacifist beliefs and are likely to take action on them."
2. "Husbands and wives reported that they pushed, grabbed, shoved, slapped, and either kicked, bit or punched their spouses during the survey year."
3. The Quaker sample didn't use more extreme forms of violence such as "beating each other up, or threatening or using knives or guns."

Marriages: Taking Hold

1. One of the most effective tools that we have available to support and strengthen marriages among us are Marriage Encounter weekends. These are intense working experiences, designed to help couples whose marriages are already good, or at least sound, experience a "recovery of love." Meetings may wish to arrange for child-care to free couples to devote this much time to enriching their relationship.
2. Based on the Marriage Encounter experience and model, Recovery of Hope (337 North Waco, Wichita, KA 67202) is carrying out an effective program for "marriages which have died or are near death."

QUAKER QUOTES

George Fox, *Epistle 168*, 1658:

Friends everywhere, who have tasted of the love, mercy, and kindness of God, and his power, ye are called to holiness and chastity. Therefore keep out of inordinate affections, and inordinate fleshly love, and feigned flattery and desires, which are below the truth; which will bring you to infirmness. And keep out of fond affections, and fond love that draws out the fleshly part, the fleshly eye, and brings into pride and looseness, and false liberty, and to abuse the power of God. Oh! keep out of all uncleanness, whatever may be pretended, and fleshly desires...but keep your bodies clean from all fornication, adultery, and uncleanness...

Richmond Declaration of Faith, 1887:

Marriage...is a solemn engagement for the term of life, (Matt. 19:5,6) designed for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, that they may be helpmeets to each other in things temporal and spiritual.

London Yearly Meeting, *Advices*, 1964:

No relationship can be a right one which makes use of another person through selfish desire. In looking forward to the lifelong comradeship of marriage, ...seek to be joined in a common discipleship of Jesus Christ, desiring that your union may be owned and blessed by him. Consider together the responsibilities of parenthood....Ask God's guidance continually; and when difficulties arise remind yourselves of the value of prayer, of perseverance, and of a sense of humour.

Mary S. Calderone, *Human Sexuality and the Quaker Conscience*, 1973:

Sexual morality consists in...wrestling openly with the question of the many meanings of sex in life. For reproduction? Obviously. For lusty pleasure? Unquestionably. For deep, mutual passion? Hopefully. For tenderness and caring, for fun and laughter, for companionship, for communication? A thousand times yes. To bring us closer to God? If an affirmative relationship with another person can do this, sex may or may not be a part of it....

David R. Mace, *Marriage as Vocation*, 1968:

A further implication of marriage as vocation is the sacramental nature of the sexual union. This concept should have special significance for Friends, who...take the view that all life can have a sacramental quality....The unitive end of sex is theologically equally important with the procreative: and the unitive function must be sustained even when the procreative

has for good reason to be set aside by the use of birth control.

Richard Foster, *Money, Sex & Power*, 1985:

Sexual intercourse...touches deep into the spirit of each person and produces a profound union that the biblical writers call "one flesh." Remember, we do not have a body, we are a body; we do not have a spirit, we are a spirit. What touches the body deeply touches the spirit as well.

Herb Lape, "Our 300-Year-Old Testimony on Sexual Expression," *Friends Journal*, February 1, 1986:

But for the sake of our children and others looking for corporate help in discerning the word of God from that of selfish desire, let us all oppose this "worldly" notion that sexual decisions are left entirely to the authority of individual feelings....We have been created with a powerful sexual drive that can either be used for tremendous good or great evil. We live in a world that stimulates this drive for profit and pleasure....We must at least have a corporate testimony that affirms our rock bottom belief that we seek to have the spirit of God direct all our actions so that we might be serving to heal this broken world and not further confuse it.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why has Christianity so often seemed to reject the positive Biblical attitude toward human sexuality? How can our meeting/church more clearly recover the Biblical celebration of good sex?
2. Jesus opposed the easy freedom husbands had in his day to "throw away" wives to lives of almost certain prostitution. He said that divorce had been allowed "for your hardness of heart" (Matthew 19:8). Under what circumstances might divorce be allowable today? How supportive is our meeting community of divorces? Of marriages that are experiencing difficulties?
3. Singles (never married, widowed or divorced) make up an increasing proportion of the population. How can our meeting support singles in our community who hope eventually to marry or remarry? What about those who may be called to live as singles?
4. Do you agree that Leviticus 18:22 and Romans 1:27 oppose homosexual activity? What should be the Christian attitude toward the approximately five percent of the population who have a clear homosexual orientation?
5. In the Bible Study, it was pointed out that Paul frequently linked greed and sexual immorality. Do we have a different attitude toward those among us who struggle with greed than toward those who struggle with sexual immorality? If so, why?

6. Do you agree with the assertion that over 95% of the 1.5 million abortions performed in the United States each year are performed out of concern for the economic or psychological quality of life of the mother rather than for medical reasons or because of rape? Do you think that Friends should have a corporate testimony against abortion on demand? What should that be?

Fellowship, the Mystery of Christ

Our Former Condition (Ephesians 2:1-3, 11-12)

"Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12).

Do the words, "separated, alienated, strangers, and having no hope," fairly describe the experience of people in our secular culture? What was your experience before coming to Christ?

Our Present Fellowship (Ephesians 2:13-3:21)

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new person in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father" (Ephesians 2:13-18).

What does this passage say about God's purpose in the church? How was this purpose accomplished?

In Ephesians 3:9-10, Paul says that it is God's intent that "through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known." This suggests that the life of the church should demonstrate the breaking down of barriers of hostility among groups of people who were formerly enemies. Do you agree that this is an important part of God's purpose for the church? Should we seek to have people of a wide variety of social and racial backgrounds together in the church? Or would this inhibit growth? Does the life of our Meeting demonstrate the power of the cross of Christ to bring reconciliation to people who were formerly "enemies"?

Our Unity and Diversity (Ephesians 4)

"And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and...to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ...(Ephesians 4:11-14).

What are the "equipping gifts" and what are they for? Who are the ministers? Is it important to have a diversity of ministries? Why? What do you think might be meant by "attaining to the fulness of Christ"?

This chapter is about "the unity of the spirit" (4:3), and yet it speaks at length of differences and even anger among us: "Putting away falsehood, let every one speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.... and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:25,26,32).

Do you agree that differences and even anger have a place within the "blessed community?" When is anger sinful and when is it not? Have we learned how to "speak the truth in love"? (Ephesians 4:15)

Our Mutual Submission (Ephesians 5:1-6:9)

"Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of

Community

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To learn the scriptural understanding of fellowship and community found in Ephesians.
2. To study corporate guidance as the Quaker contribution to community.
3. To consider implications of community in our local meeting.

Teaching the Lesson

Share the first two paragraphs of "Community." Then begin the Bible Study on Ephesians.

Finish the section on Community.

Then begin the section on Corporate Guidance, considering first guidance for individuals and then corporate guidance. What does this say to us individually and as a meeting?

Follow with Questions for Discussion. Focus them on your local meeting/church. Close with Ephesians 4:1-6. Pray for unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace for your meeting.

light...try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them....Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:8,10,11,21).

Do we need the help of others in having our darkness exposed? How can we help each other to perform this service?

Do you think that the principle of "mutual submission" can and should be applied to husband-wife, parent-child and even boss-worker relationships? (See 5:22-6:9) Why did the early Friends call themselves "children of light"? Relate to this passage.

Our Continuing Struggle (Ephesians 6:10-20)

We are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day... (Ephesians 6:12-13)

Name some of the things you believe to be principalities, powers and world rulers of this present darkness. Have you included social structures, institutions, or ideologies among the "spiritual hosts"?

How are they and our community of faith in contention? Are there ways in which we could be more intentional in supporting each other in this continuing struggle?

Community

The gift of community is an essential part of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Community undergirds every other aspect of Christian life: it is in community that peace, reconciliation and equality find expression; it is in community that we experience sharing and the forgiveness of debts; it is community that provides the sounding board of truth that helps us to escape the snares of self-deceit and the love that encourages us to make new beginnings; it is in community that we find the life of joyful celebration which we vainly sought for in substance abuse and wealth; it is the community that equips us for our service in the world. Most importantly, it is through others that we discover communion with God. In his pamphlet, *A Place Called Community*, Parker Palmer quotes Martin Buber: "We expect a theophany of which we know nothing but the place, and the place is called community."

As Helen Hole wrote in her pamphlet, *Prayer, the Cornerstone*:

"As far as I can see from the evidence of the New Testament, there were no solitary Christians. If you were a Christian, this meant that you were an integral part of the community of Christians. The one possible exception is found in the story of the eunuch who was converted by Philip and who afterwards disappears from the pages of the Bible. I suspect, however, that he was not a true exception; if he was a genuine convert, he undoubtedly gathered others about him

after his return home, so that another Christian fellowship was founded. If he did not do this, he almost certainly ceased to be a Christian."

Friends have traditionally been strongly community-minded. Their experience of the Presence of Christ among them produced a strong bond of love. This sense of community extended to all aspects of life. According to Fox, the need to care for the poor and the desire to support each other in maintaining a holy life were equally important motivations in the decision to establish the first Monthly Meetings for business: "In 1653 in Cumberland many of the Elders came to me at Swarthmore in Lancashire, and desired that they might have a Monthly Meeting to look after the poor and to see that all walked according to the Truth, &c., and they had a meeting settled there for the same purpose." (Quoted in Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 143.)

Sadly, community has been giving way to individualism in Friends Meetings, no matter where they lie on the theological spectrum. As the center of the Quaker population in North America moves increasingly away from the stability of small town, rural life and is caught up in the transience and fragmentation of urban life, it becomes increasingly important for us to recover the testimony of community. At the same time, it becomes more difficult. We need to be conscious in the work of opening up opportunities for true gospel fellowship among us. We need to create ways for newcomers to enter into our fellowship as fellow citizens of the commonwealth and not simply tolerated guests. We dare not settle for what Thomas Kelly disdainfully called, "church programs of mere sociability and social contacts." It is only in coming to know one another in that which is eternal will the hunger of our souls be met and the promise of the "kingdom, on earth as it is in heaven" be held out to a hurting world.

Guidance for Individuals

Originally, "clearness committees" were groups of elders appointed by the Monthly Meeting to visit with a prospective bride and groom to establish that they were "clear" from "entanglements" that should block their proposed marriage.

In recent years, many meetings have provided "clearness committees" to meet with Friends who are wrestling with any important matter in which help in discerning God's will is needed. The committee (usually appointed by the elders of the meeting) and the seeker meet together for prayer and open sharing about the question. This is not a counseling session, but a meeting for worship seeking God's guidance in the matter at hand. The intent is to experience supportive community; often new insights into God's will are discovered.

Corporate Guidance

As Edward Burrough said, Friends are to conduct their corporate business by "mutual concord" rather than by vote.

1. Business is conducted in the context of worship. Opening and closing with silence help center the group's attention on God's presence; moments of silence and prayer

can be most helpful throughout the meeting.

2. The agenda should be thoroughly prepared in advance by the clerk. Business items should be carefully sifted by an appropriate committee before coming to Monthly Meeting, when possible.

3. The clerk of the meeting should encourage Friends to speak to the issue at hand, being sensitive to the feelings of those who are silent as well as those who speak. The clerk's primary responsibility is to "read" the sense of the meeting as to God's will concerning the matter at hand and to express this in the form of a minute.

4. Disagreements provide opportunity for seeking Truth. The meeting may resort to quiet prayer. In some cases, the matter may need to be layed over to another session. Sometimes it is helpful to ask a few sensitive Friends representing differing points of view to go aside and attempt to bring a new recommendation back to the meeting.

5. The Meeting is seeking neither unanimity nor consensus, but a sense of general unity in discerning God's will. When the clerk senses unity, individuals who still disagree with the decision but recognize the will of the Meeting, may state their position, indicating that they do not intend to "stand in the way" of the Meeting proceeding. Or they may request that their opposition be minuted. In most cases, a Meeting will not take action until substantial unity has been achieved recognizing that the minority may have important truth to offer.

6. In difficult or controversial situations, the clerk will want to offer the minute tentatively, requesting further consideration before calling for the approval of those present. It is often wise to give the recording clerk time, while the meeting waits in silent worship, to write the minute. When it is read back greater clarity can be achieved.

QUAKER QUOTES

Francis Howgill, *Christian Faith and Practice*, 1672:

The Lord of Heaven and earth we found to be near at hand, and, as we waited upon him in pure silence, our minds out of all things, his heavenly presence appeared in our assemblies, when there was no language, tongue nor speech from any creature. The Kingdom of Heaven did gather us and catch us all, as in a net, and his heavenly power at one time drew many hundreds to land. We came to know a place to stand in and what to wait in; and the Lord appeared daily to us, to our astonishment, amazement and great admiration, insomuch that we often said one unto another with great joy of heart: "What, is the Kingdom of God come to be with men?...And from that day forward, our hearts were knit unto the Lord and one unto another in true and fervent love, in the covenant of Life with God.

George Fox, *Epistle 22*, 1653:

Dear Friends, watch over one another in love, and stir up that which is pure in one another, and exhort one another daily. And the Lord keep you all in his fear, and in his obedience now and evermore!

George Fox, *Journal*, 1660:

And justices and captains had come to break up this meeting, but when they saw Friends' books and accounts of collections concerning the poor, how that we did take care one county to help another, and to provide for our poor that none of them should be chargeable to their parishes, etc., and took care to help Friends beyond the seas, the justices and officers were made to confess that we did their work and Friends desired them to come and sit with them.

George Fox, *Epistle 149*, 1657:

And Friends meet together, and know one another in that which is eternal, which was before the world was. For knowing one another only in the letter and flesh, differs you little from the beasts of the field; for what they know they know naturally....Therefore in the light wait and walk, that ye may have fellowship one with another...

Edward Borrough, *Christian Faith and Practice* #354, 1662:

Being orderly come together, (you are) not to spend time with needless, unnecessary and fruitless discourses; but to proceed in the wisdom of God not in the way of the world, as a worldly assembly of men, but hot contests, by seeking to outspoke and over-reach one another in discourse as if it were controversy between party and party of men, or two sides violently striving for dominion, not deciding affairs by the greater vote. But in the wisdom, love and fellowship of God, in gravity, patience, meekness, in unity and concord submitting one to another in lowliness of heart, and in the holy Spirit of truth and righteousness, all things (are) to be carried on; by hearing, and determining every matter coming before you, in love, coolness, gentleness, and dear unity; — I say, as one only party, all for the truth of Christ, and for the carrying on the work of the Lord, and to determine of things by a general mutual concord...in which his Spirit of love and unity must rule.

Thomas Kelly, "The Blessed Community," *A Testament of Devotion*, 1941:

When we are drowned in the overwhelming seas of the love of God, we find ourselves in a new and particular relation to a few of our fellows....A new kind of life-sharing and of love has arisen of which we had had only dim hints before. Are these the bonds of love which knit together the early Christians, the very warp and woof of the Kingdom of God?...

We don't create it deliberately; we find it and we find ourselves increasingly within it as we find ourselves increasingly within Him....Ever within the Christian church, has existed the Holy Fellowship, the Blessed Community, an *ekklesiola in ecclesia*, a little church within the church.

Iowa Yearly Meeting, *Discipline* 1983:

The Friends recognize and emphasize the fundamental and essential truth that Jesus Christ is the Head of His Church; and He dwells in the hearts of His believers; that, as they look for His guidance, their understandings are enlightened and they are enabled to do His will. Associated with this is the further truth that the Head of the Church is pleased to confer upon each believer some special gift or gifts which he is to exercise with such ability as may be possessed. Members have equal rights and privileges in the denomination, modified only by the gifts they have received and their faithfulness in the exercise thereof. It is, therefore, both theocratic and democratic in the principle of its government.

Howard Brinton, "The Meeting Community," *Friends For 300 Years*, 1952:

The Quaker meeting used to be, and to some extent still is, both a religious and an economic unit....In 1737 a list of persons entitled to support was drawn up by each meeting. This list constituted the first list of members and introduced the concept of a definite membership....

The meeting community is probably more needed today as a stabilizing element in society than ever before. The family is small and often unable to withstand the storms which sweep over it in our unstable economic system.

Parker Palmer, "A Place Called Community," 1977:

The core of the Quaker tradition is a way of inward seeking which leads to outward acts of integrity and service. Friends are most in the Spirit when they stand at the crossing point of the inward and the outward life. And that is the intersection at which we find community. Community is a place where the connections felt in the heart make themselves known in bonds between people, and where the tuggings and pullings of those bonds keep opening up our hearts.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What brings true Christian fellowship into being?
2. What are the entry points for new people into our community of faith?
3. How does our Meeting attend to its responsibility to be an economic as well as spiritual community? Are there "poor among us"? How are we attending to their need?

4. Are our business meetings held in a true spirit of worship? Are they concerned with the real business of the church--helping the members discern the will of God in the important affairs of life--or are they primarily caught up in maintaining the institution?

5. What do we think are the purposes of our Meeting community? The Bible Study suggests two primary purposes for Christian communities: to be places that demonstrate that the cross of Christ has broken down "the walls of enmity" and to be support groups in the struggle with "principalities and powers." How might these purposes change the character of our Meeting's life?

6. Are the ideals of community and individual freedom in conflict? How should the two to be balanced in our Meeting? Should we hold each other accountable to live up to our testimonies? What does love require?

BIBLE STUDY

Spiritual Baptism

Mark 1:4,7-8

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.... "After me comes he who is mightier than I... I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Most of those who became followers of Jesus were among the throngs baptized by John. They, and many in the Christian church since, have continued John's baptism in one form or another.

What was the purpose of John's baptism?

Jesus was baptized in water by John. Does that make water baptism incumbent upon Jesus' followers? How about circumcision? (See Luke 2:21-39.)

Why do you suppose Jesus wanted to be baptized by John?

Acts 1:4-5, 8

And while staying with them [Jesus] charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. ...But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the world."

This takes place during the period after the resurrection and before the ascension.

How is Jesus' baptism to be "administered"? In what ways is this different from John's baptism? What purpose did Jesus give for Holy Spirit baptism?

Mark 10:37-40

And [James and John] said to [Jesus], "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able."

And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant..."

What cup and baptism is Jesus talking about here? (See Mark 14:36.) Is this the same baptism that Jesus promised in the Acts 1 passage? In what ways do they seem different? In what ways might they be the same? What was the relationship between power (see Acts 1:8) and suffering in Jesus' life and ministry?

Romans 6:1-4

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

In your own words, how does Paul understand the meaning of baptism? Do you think that continuing John's water baptism would help or hinder people in coming to experience the baptism we have been discussing?

Baptism in the Acts of the Apostles

Other Christians admit that spiritual baptism is important, but then insist that

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 12

Spiritual Baptism

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Student

1. To learn what the Bible says about baptism.
2. To study the early Friends Testimony on Spiritual Baptism.
3. To discuss the implications of spiritual baptism for your meeting today.

Teaching the Lesson

Open with the Quaker Quote by Paul Anderson. Then begin the Bible Study on Spiritual Baptism.

Study the early Friends experience on spiritual baptism from Spiritual Baptism and Testimonies. Talk about "convincement" and share personal experiences of conviction. Look especially at the questions in the second to the last paragraph.

Discuss Questions for Discussion. Use Quaker Quotes as appropriate to the discussion.

Read Acts 1:4-5 and 8. Close with prayer for spiritual baptism to be poured upon your meeting.

Spiritual Baptism and the Testimonies

we receive the Holy Spirit at the time of water baptism. Yet others insist that there must be an initial water baptism, which is followed by a second baptism or filling with the Holy Spirit. An analysis of all the incidents of baptism in Acts shows that the biblical picture is more complicated than that.

Some Received the Holy Spirit When They Were "Baptized"

Three thousand were "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" on the day of Pentecost with the promise from Peter, "and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38-41). Water is not specified, but may be assumed.

The Ethiopian was water baptized by Philip and went away rejoicing (a sign of the Holy Spirit). (Acts 8:35-39)

Some Were "Baptized" but Received the Spirit Later

Philip baptized the Samaritans "in the name of Jesus," but they only received the Holy Spirit later, when Peter and John prayed and "laid their hands on them."

Some Received the Holy Spirit and Then Were "Baptized"

Paul received the Holy Spirit when Ananias prayed and laid hand on him. "Then he rose and was baptized" (Acts 9:17-18).

Cornelius and his household received the Holy Spirit while hearing Peter preach the gospel. Seeing this, Peter baptized them (Acts 10:35-48).

Some Received the Holy Spirit Without Any Mention of Baptism

The 120 in the upper room on the day of Pentecost received the Holy Spirit and there is no mention of baptism. This includes the eleven apostles (Acts 2:1-4).

Some Were "Baptized," but the Nature of the Baptism Is Unspecified

The twelve Ephesians had been baptized into John's baptism, but Paul told them about Jesus. "They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Did this involve water, or did this phrase describe the laying on of hands when they received the Holy Spirit? (Acts 19:1-6)

Apollos knew John's baptism only, but spoke boldly and accurately (Acts 18:25). Also Lydia (16:14-15), the jailer at Philippi (Acts 16:31-33), and the many Corinthians (Acts 18:8).

Apparently, God is not concerned with ritual, one way or the other. The negative side of ritual became apparent in Corinth, where outward baptisms proved to be a source of schism (1 Corinthians 1:10-17). The disuse of ritual, as at Pentecost, is a positive testimony that baptism is the work of the Risen Lord, and not a human initiative.

The early Friends' understanding of baptism was informed by the words of John the Baptist in Luke 3:16-17: "I baptize you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming,...he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

The preaching and writing of the first Friends had one purpose in mind: to bring people into the presence of the One who alone can baptise with the Holy Spirit. They understood that spiritual baptism meant a total revolution in a person's world and that the first stage is experienced as the searing revelation of personal sinfulness. This they called "convincement." It was in the interest of convincement that they held up the testimonies. See how this works in this typical tract of George Fox, titled *The Lamb's Officer*...

"The Lord Jesus Christ is come to reign, and his everlasting kingdom is set up, and the bar of judgement, and all are called to it and he calls all up before it...."

"And so you that prison, that whip, that burn, that cut off ears, that banish, that prison until death, ... hath not all this hanging men for cattle, and for money... been set up since the days of the apostles, when you should have let them live to restore...? and are you not guilty in this? and act contrary to the law and gospel...."

"Answer for yourselves, and come up, priests, ...and parsons, are you not such as go in long robes, fashions and lusts of the world, with... wearing of gold rings, in the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life...? guilty, or not guilty? Let the witness in all your consciences answer it, which is now bringing you before the throne of the Lamb...."

"And... professors [i.e., you who profess to be Christian], have you visited Christ in prison, or have you not been they that have caused him in his members to be cast into prison, yea til death? and must they go into everlasting punishment, that doth not visit him in prison?...Now is the day of your trial come... and now is the judgement of God come, and the man Christ Jesus, whom he ordained to judge the world in "righteousness, according to the gospel...."

Spiritual baptism was a "threshing" of the wheat from the chaff. Those whose hearts were touched were invited into the "barn" of the settled meetings. There, in the still quiet, where perhaps no words were spoken, Christ was Present to heal, to restore, to give victory over sin. Fox describes this in one of his earliest epistles (# 10):

"Stand still that which shows and discovers; and there doth strength immediately come. And stand still in the light, and submit to it, and the other will be hushed and gone; and then content comes.... When your thoughts are out, abroad, then troubles move you. But come to stay your minds upon that spirit which was before the letter; here ye learn to read the scriptures aright. If ye do anything in your own wills, then ye tempt God; but stand still in that power which brings peace."

What can we learn from all this? Language and issues change, but the basic dynamics of spiritual baptism do not change. The testimonies should still serve as a threshing fork. What would happen if our Peace and Social Concern Committees saw their task as one of training the members of our meetings in the use of spiritual winnowing forks? What would happen if we were to go about our communities and daily business separating wheat from chaff, and gathering in those of tender conscience?

The testimonies speak to a quality of life which is intrinsically good. We know that because they point us to life as God intended it from the beginning. It is foolish to think that we can have peace, equality, truth, community, joyful sexual purity, celebrations in the Holy Spirit instead of unholy spirits, or the communion with God that leads to service, unless we are willing to point people to the Way through the flaming sword into the paradise of God.

QUAKER QUOTES

Richmond Declaration of Faith, 1887:

We reverently believe that, as there is one Lord and one faith, so there is, under the Christian dispensation, but one baptism (Ephesians 4:4,5), even that whereby all believers are baptized in the one Spirit into the one body (1 Cor 12:13). This is not an outward baptism with water, but a spiritual experience; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh (1 Peter 3:21), but that inward work which, by transforming the heart and settling the soul upon Christ, brings forth the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the experience of His love and power, as the risen and ascended Savior....

Hannah Whitall Smith, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, 1870:

[God] carries us through a process of transformation, longer or shorter as our peculiar case may require, making actual and experimental the results for which we have trusted. We have dared, for instance, according to the command in Rom. 6:11, by faith to reckon ourselves dead unto sin. The Lord makes this a reality and puts us to death by a thousand little mortifications and crosses to the natural man.

Maurice A. Creasey, *Christian Faith and Practice*, 1956:

We desire to bear a corporate testimony to the fact that, while to be made a member of Christ's Body does not necessarily involve any outward rite, it does inescapably require an inner transformation of the whole self by the indwelling Spirit of God.

Paul Anderson, "Friends and Sacraments," *Meet the Friends*, 1982:

Spiritual baptism is more of an abiding immersion. We abide in Christ, and He in us, and we immerse ourselves in His Spirit in an ongoing sense. Spiritual baptism is...an ongoing event that purifies and transforms the individual, bringing conformity to Christ.

James Nayler, *The War of the Lamb*, 1656:

The Lamb's War you must know before you can witness his kingdom...He that preaches the kingdom of Christ in words, without victory, is the thief that goes before Christ...In whomsoever he appear,...he lights his candle in their hearts that they may find out every secret evil that the man of sin has treasured..., and to subject the creature wholly to himself that he may form a new man, a new heart, new thoughts, and a new obedience, in a new way, in all things to reign, and there is his kingdom.

Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*:

Their way of life was part of their warfare and a demonstration of their message. Standards were aggressive, not defensive; they were called Testimonies and were seen as instruments of conversion.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Ephesians 4:5 says there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." What baptism do we have? How do we know if we have had it?
2. Some say that proselytizing is un-Quakerly. Others say that the Quaker distinctives stand in the way of drawing people to Christ. The essay *Spiritual Baptism and the Testimonies* asserts that the testimonies and evangelism depend on each other. How do you come out on this?
3. Have someone read aloud the selections from Fox's *Lamb's Officer*? What is your reaction? What was Fox attempting to do? Discuss how our meeting could try to accomplish the same end today.
4. Fox instructs us to "stand still in the light, and submit to it." Is waiting on the Lord in unprogrammed worship necessary to the experience of spiritual baptism?

BIBLE STUDY

The Place of Meeting

Communion

Paul gives his interpretation of the meaning of the Lord's Supper in this passage:

I speak to you as reasonable people: you judge the meaning. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not fellowship in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not fellowship in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many, are one body, for we all share of the single bread (1 Corinthians 10:15-17, my translation).

Fellowship, here, translates the Greek word *koinonia*. The King James Version uses the word, "communion."

What is Paul's understanding of the meaning of communion? Can communion be an individual experience? If your answer is "yes," then why is *koinonia* an appropriate word?

Paul is severely critical of the Corinthians practice of the Lord's supper:

When you meet together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal, and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing?... For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgement upon himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died (1 Corinthians 11:20-22, 29-30).

What is the cause of Paul's severe criticism?

Some of the earliest manuscripts were corrected by later Christian scribes to read "without discerning the body of the Lord, eats and drinks judgement..."

Does this change the meaning of the passage? What does it mean to discern the body? If Paul originally meant the body of the church what was his criticism of the Corinthians' communion?

Jesus said: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.... Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you... It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:51, 63).

What does Jesus say is the bread which he is giving us to eat?

Many of Jesus' disciples were offended at this saying and left him (See John 6:66). Do you take offense at this? Why?

How does one eat and drink Jesus? Pretend you are explaining this to a new Christian. Try to develop an instruction on how to practice true communion which you can all agree on.

In the Gospel of John, the narrative of the Last Supper does not include anything about bread and wine. Instead John describes Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. He concludes the episode with the words "I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15).

Do you think that John was saying that service and communion are the same?

Silence

In the Bible, silence is an "apocalyptic event." *Apokalypsis* is Greek for "revelation"; what is revealed is the great and dreadful Day of the Lord. Early Friends called everyone to experience this shattering apocalypse of God's Presence in their own lives.

If you are using this Bible Study in a class, take the last ten minutes to appreciate in a new way the Biblical meaning of silent worship. Have the group quiet itself. Then have different people read these passages out of the silence,

TESTIMONIES

LESSON 13

Communion

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Objectives for Students

1. To study selected Bible passages on communion and silence.
2. To understand the Friends testimony of communion and the three places it takes place.
3. To consider the role of silence in relationship to communion.

Teaching the Lesson

Open with the Quaker Quote by Alan Kolp. Begin the Bible Study and focus on the first section on Communion.

Next move to Communion: Where We Meet God. Study the three places where true communion takes place -- in the gathered meeting for worship, in service, and in mission. Use Quaker Quotes where appropriate to your discussion.

Finally consider the Questions for Discussion. Encourage everyone to participate in the discussion.

Close with question four and the topic Silence in the Bible Study. Allow a time of silence between each scripture reading.

Please fill out the evaluation form found at the back of the book. We at FUM are vitally interested in your comments and experience.

leaving ample time for worship and meditation between each reading.

Be silent before the Lord God!
For the day of the Lord is at hand (Zephaniah 1:7).

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come and I will dwell in the midst of you, says the Lord. And many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of you...

Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord; for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling (Zechariah 2:10-11,13).

Listen to me in silence, O coastlands;
let the people renew their strength;
let them approach, then let them speak;
let us together draw near for judgment.
(Isaiah 41:1)

When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. And... the smoke of the incense rose with the prayer of the saints from the hand of the angel before God...

The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire...

The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea...

The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven...

The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and... a third of the day was kept from shining...

And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and... then came locusts on the earth...

Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God...

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 8:1; 11:15).

Communion: Where We Meet God

Jesus is the Way into the Garden of Paradise, where there is communion with God. We know that for many Christians the outward ceremony of the Lord's Supper is a potent reminder of the communion for which our souls hunger. However, Friends have an important testimony to bear before the whole world that the real communion with God is spiritual and cannot be produced by human manipulation. Jesus points to three "places" where true spiritual communion takes place.

The first place *where we meet God is in the gathered meeting for worship*. "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20). It is undoubtedly true that individuals have life-transforming

encounters with God on their own. However, as the Bible Study reveals, communion with God in the Christian sense is most particularly the encounter of fellowship. God richly blesses us by allowing us to become the vehicle for the Divine Word to one another. The open, unprogrammed times of worship that we treasure are more than a sign or tradition. It is the essence of Eden: a spiritual Garden where we stop our human business long enough to allow the Word to take up His dwelling among us. We meet God in unprogrammed worship.

The second place *where we meet God is in service*. Jesus is very clear that we encounter him in practical deeds of service to the hungry, the alien, the poor, the sick, the prisoner. If we fail to perform the deeds of love to "the least of these," we will fail to have met Jesus (Matthew 25:31-46). Friends have been known for their commitment to service. This is not something about which we can be proud, for we know that service does not arise out of nobility, but rather out of an awareness that we find Jesus in and through the ones we serve. We meet God in service.

The third place *where we meet God is in mission*. James Nayler (1617-1660), under arrest for his itinerant Quaker ministry, told the following story:

"I was at the plow, meditating on the things of God, and suddenly I heard a voice saying to me, 'Get thee out from thy kindred, and from thy father's house.' And I had a promise given with it, whereupon I did exceedingly rejoice... But shortly afterwards going gate-ward with a friend from my own house, having on an old suit, without any money, having neither taken leave of wife or children, not thinking then of any journey, I was commanded to go into the west, not knowing whither I should go, nor what I was to do there. But when I had been there a little while, I had given me what I was to declare. And ever since I have remained not knowing today what I was to do tomorrow... [The promise was] that God would be with me, which promise I find made good every day."

The Resurrected Lord says to us, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). The great evangelical explosion of the first period of Quakerism was fired by the recovery of the spiritual nature of communion. We meet God in mission.

Alan Kolp reminds us of Augustine's definition of sacraments: a "visible sign of an invisible reality." All of the Testimonies that we have studied fit that definition, for each of them is a visible sign that Eden is possible. Alan writes, "The call to discipleship is not to participate in the sacraments, but to live sacramentally." Amen.

QUAKER QUOTES

George Fox, *Journal*:

But will you come no nearer to Christ's death than to take bread and wine in remembrance of his death? For after you

have eaten in remembrance of his death, then you must come into his death and die with him if you will live with him as the apostles did ...

George Fox, *Works*, 4:134:

Concerning silent meetings; the intent of all speaking is to bring into the life...and to live in it and enjoy it, and to feel God's presence, and that is the silence, (not in the wandering, whirling, tempestuous part in man or woman) ...in which the fellowship is attained to in the spirit of God...

George Fox, *Epistle*:

Meet together in the name of Jesus, ... where Salvation is; he is your Prophet, your Shepherd, your Bishop, your Priest, in the midst of you, to open to you, and to sanctify you, and to feed you with Life, and to quicken you with Life.

Robert Barclay, *Apology*:

When assembled, it should be the common task of one and all to wait upon God. It should be a time for turning away from one's own thought and for suspending the imagination in order to feel the Presence of the Lord in the midst and to know a true gathering in his name according to his promise....

John Burnyeat, 1631-1690:

How were our hearts melted as wax, and our souls poured out as water before the Lord, ...when not a word outwardly... had been uttered! ...Everyone that was faithful waited upon the living word in our own hearts.

Richmond Declaration of Faith, 1887:

The presence of Christ with His church is not designed to be by symbol or representation, but in the real communication of His own Spirit....

Worship is the adoring response of the heart and mind to the influence of the Spirit of God.... We recognize the value of silence, not as an end, but as a means toward the attainment of the end; a silence, not of listlessness or of vacant musing, but of holy expectation before the Lord.... The true disciple will be found still sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening that he may learn, and learning that he may obey.

Keith Sarver, 1966:

The central purpose of silence in worship is only a means toward the goal of communion [with God]; its value is in reaching an inner quietness so one may hear the still small voice of God.

Thomas Kelly, "The Gathered Meeting," *The Eterna; Promise*:

In the Quaker practice of group worship on the basis of silence comes special times when an electric hush and solemnity and depth of power steals over the worshippers.... A quickening presence pervades us The Burning Bush has been kindled in our midst, and we stand together on holy ground.

Alan Kolp, "Friends, Sacraments and the Future," *Quaker Life*, February, 1980:

Augustine has given us the classic definition of sacraments: A sacrament is a *visible sign of an invisible reality*.... Jesus became the sacrament himself; the visible sign of the invisible reality of God's presence.... Men and women, not bread, wine, and water, are the effective signs of God's real and involved presence in the world. *The call to discipleship is not to participate in the sacraments, but to live sacramentally.*

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Give everyone an opportunity to share where they experience communion with God.
2. What is your feeling about what happens in unprogrammed worship? Is it an experience of communion? Do you experience the *kol Yahweh* (the voice of God) in it?
3. Is there a danger that when all of life is considered sacramental that, in fact, we fail to experience "sacrament" at all? How can we guard against this happening?
4. The Bible Study concludes with readings that show silence as an "apocalyptic" event. You might want to conclude this class session with those readings. In your experience, or in the experience of your meeting, has silent worship ever been a shattering experience of revelation?

ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

TESTIMONIES

Ben Richmond is currently Friends United Meeting Coordinator for Peace and Social Concerns and the Quaker Volunteer Witness program. He joined the FUM staff in November, 1985, after serving for three years as pastor of West Branch Friends Church in Iowa.

Ben's membership with Friends originated with the Multnomah Monthly Meeting (unprogrammed) in Portland, Oregon in 1971. While there, he worked with the peace education staff of the American Friends Service Committee. Ben received his Master of Ministry degree with honors from Earlham School of Religion in 1983. His articles have appeared in *Quaker Life*, *Friends Journal*, and *Quaker Religious Thought*.

At the 1977 Conference of Friends in America at Wichita, Ben met Jody Kerman. They found they shared a concern for the renewal of the Society of Friends through traveling in gospel Ministry. They married and are living in Richmond with their three children, Jessica (8), Peter (6), and Christopher (3).

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Trish is married to Curt Delancey, pastor of Martinsville (Ohio) Friends Meeting. They have two children, Mike (16), and Rich (11), and three Vietnamese foster children, John who is attending college, and Thanh and Becky who are both married and working in Chinese restaurants, plus one grandson, Phillip.

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