

“Articles of Faith”

Not dogma, not rules.
General principles

There is

1. “That of God in Everyone”

Terms Used: “God, God Within, Christ Within, Inward Christ, Inward Light, Inner Light, The Seed Within, Inward Teacher”

In other modern contexts: Wm. James’ “More”, Jung’s “self, the deep center”
“...that your life may preach...then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone.” –G. Fox, 1656

2. Continuing revelation

God still speaks – did not stop with the end of scripture. Wait in the silence, with open mind and heart, for the still, small voice.

“Christ has come to teach his people himself.” –Fox

An assumption that the spiritual world is just as real as the material world – may be the only ‘reality.’

3. Personal experience of the Light

Available to anyone who listens.

“Take heed dear Friends to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts, for they are the leadings of God.” –Pennington?

“This I knew experimentally.” –Fox

“You say Christ says this and the apostles say that, but what can’st thou say? Art thou a child of the Light and hast thou walked in the Light, and what thou speakest, it is inwardly from God?” –Fox

4. Transforming power of love

Love is an active, not a passive power.

“Agape” – The kind of love shown by Jesus

“Creative understanding” –Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Soul force” or “Truth force” –Gandhi

“The love that casts out fear”

Howard Brinton said that if these four elements are present, that is Quakerism. We may add to them, but not subtract.

Autonomy—but check leadings with meeting community
(An early precept emerging from Nayler experience)

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A
T E S T I M O N
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Where Inward &
Outward Meet

From these principles are derived the

Testimonies

Gradually articulated and consolidated and applied to changing situations throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

Again, from Howard Brinton:

Integrity

“Let your yea be yea and your nay, nay”

No oaths, no double standard, truth in everything.

In business, full measure and fair pricing.

(This possibly more than anything else gained respect for Quakers in “the world.”)

Harmony (Peace)

If God is in all and all are equal, no one can do another any harm.

Peace testimony stems from this – “Live in that life and power which takes away the occasion for war.” – Fox

Infuse also into daily and family life.

“Peace testimony is shoot, not root of Quakerism.” – Pierre Ceresole

Equality (Community)

Logical if there is “that of God in everyone.”

Men, women, children. All people everywhere.

Non-hierarchical structure of society is the ideal.

“Plain language” / No “hat honor”

Simplicity

Live simply so that material things, money, business, busyness, etc. don't get in the way of our spiritual development.

“Live simply that others may simply live.” (Gandhi?)

“Right sharing of world resources”

All inter-related, stemming from the basic principles and in turn reinforcing them.

Faith and Practice