

**EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES AND EPISTLES
OF THE YEARLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, HELD IN
LONDON, FROM ITS FIRST INSTITUTION TO
THE PRESENT TIME, RELATING TO CHRISTIAN
DOCTRINE, PRACTICE, AND DISCIPLINE**

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Extracts from the Minutes and Epistles of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Held in London, from Its First Institution to the Present Time, Relating to Christian Doctrine, Practice, and Discipline by Various

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NOTICE TO THE READER.

In this compilation are included documents of various dates. The figures appended to the extracts indicate the respective years in which they were issued. Where two or more dates are appended to one paragraph, it is intended to show either that some change has been made in the original at the time of the second or other later date, or that two or more paragraphs, issued at different times, have been combined. The letters P. E. added to the date denote that the paragraph was taken from a printed epistle of the Yearly Meeting; whilst all paragraphs to which these letters are not affixed were taken either from special addresses, or from minutes issued by that meeting.

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CHAPTER I.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

FROM AN EPISTLE ADDRESSED BY GEORGE FOX AND OTHERS,
TO THE GOVERNOR OF BARBADOES, 1671.

We do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God, who is the Creator of all things both in heaven and in the earth, and the Preserver of all that He hath made; who is God over all, blessed for ever; to whom be all honour and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and for evermore! And we do own and believe in Jesus Christ, his beloved and only begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him. And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; and that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of his Father, for our justification; and we do believe that He ascended up into heaven; and now sitteth at the right hand of God. This Jesus, who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we do believe that there is no other foundation to be laid but that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; who, we believe, tasted death for every man, and shed his blood for all men, and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world: according as John the Baptist testified of Him, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the

world," John i. 29. We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, even the Captain of our salvation, (who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works) who is the Seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to wit, Christ Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. That He is (as the Scriptures of truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved. It is He alone who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls: He it is who is our Prophet, whom Moses long since testified of, saying, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you: and it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people," Acts iii. 22, 23. He it is that is now come "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true." And He rules in our hearts by his law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. And we have no life but by Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, by whose blood we are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God. And He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending; He being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, life, grace, and peace; the Author and Finisher of our faith. Now this Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in; Him whom the high-priest raged against, and said He had spoken blasphemy; whom the priests and the elders of the Jews took counsel together against, and put to death; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach an horrible lie, namely, that his disciples came and stole Him away by night whilst they slept. And after He was risen from the dead, the history of the acts of the apostles sets forth how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus, for preaching Christ and his resurrection. This, we say, is