

**RULES OF DISCIPLINE AND
ADVICES OF THE YEARLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF
FRIENDS HELD IN PHILADELPHIA.
(FIFTEENTH AND RACE STREETS)**

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RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING

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INTRODUCTION.

It is held by the Religious Society of Friends that God endows every human being with a measure of His own Divine Spirit, by which he has revealed Himself to His children in all generations; that this Spirit, which although in man, is not of man, is the manifestation in our human nature of the Eternal Word "which was in the beginning," and which was manifested without measure in the person of our Divine Master, Jesus Christ; and that as we submit ourselves to the leadings of this Light of Christ in the soul, we are loosed from the bonds of self and sin, and enabled to live in conformity with the will of our Heavenly Father.

The Society early recognized that there were among its members different degrees of spiritual growth and religious experience, and that those whose lives had long been dedicated to the obedient service of the Lord might nurture the growth of those younger in His service. In their engagement to meet together for the worship of God in spirit according to the direction of the Holy Lawgiver, they were also exercised to have a tender care over each other, that all might be preserved in unity of faith and practice.

To this end, therefore, and as an exterior hedge of preservation against the many temptations and dangers to which our situation in the world exposes us, advices have been issued and rules adopted from time to time by the Society.

They found their inception in the impressions made upon concerned minds, and having been submitted individually or through subordinate meetings to the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, they were adopted and issued by that body.

Collections of these Rules and Advices, in manuscript, were formed by the Yearly Meeting as early as 1704, again in 1719, and at different times later, notably in 1762; and in 1797 the compilation was issued in print. The book was added to and changed at various times. In 1892 it was concluded to revise the whole, and the revision having been adopted by the Yearly Meeting in 1894, now forms our Book of Discipline.

[NOTE.—In the following pages, pronouns of the masculine gender include the feminine, and the singular number includes the plural in all consistent cases.

The term Quarterly Meeting includes Half-Year Meetings in consistent cases.]