

**SUMMARY OF CHRISTIAN
DOCTRINES AS
HELD BY THE RELIGIOUS
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649335725

Summary of Christian Doctrines as Held by the Religious Society of Friends by Samuel M. Janney

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Cover @ 2017

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SAMUEL M. JANNEY

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AS HELD BY

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF
FRIENDS.

BY
SAMUEL M. JANNEY.

Second Edition.

PHILADELPHIA:
FRIENDS' PUBLICATION ASSOCIATION.
Office, No. 701 Arch Street.
1871.

C8344.666.33

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
SHELDON FUND
JULY 10, 1940

PREFACE.

This essay has been written in pursuance of a suggestion made by some members of Friends' Publication Association, that a brief statement of Friends' views would be useful, to be handed to those who inquire what we believe, and what are the grounds of our faith. The views herein presented in a concise form are substantially the same as those more fully explained in two of my previous works, entitled, "Conversations on Religious Subjects," and "The Life of George Fox, with Dissertations on his views concerning the Doctrines, Testimonies and Discipline of the Christian Church." Several passages are in nearly the same language, and some further illustrations have been added, my aim being, not originality of expression, but Gospel truth in simplicity and clearness.

S. M. JANNEY.

Lincoln, Loudon Co., Va., 12th mo., 1868.

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THE SCRIPTURES.

The Religious Society of Friends, from its rise to the present day, has always maintained its belief in the authenticity and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, referring to them for proof of its principles, and acknowledging them to be the only fit outward test of Christian Doctrines.

We do not call them the Word of God, because this appellation is applied by the writers of the Scriptures to that eternal power by which the worlds were made; for "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John i, 1.

We assign to the Scriptures all the authority they claim for themselves, which is chiefly expressed in the following texts: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might

have hope." Rom. xv, 4. "The Holy Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus." "All Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* 2 Tim. iii, 15-17.

In the advices issued by our several Yearly Meetings, the Scriptures are very frequently and earnestly recommended to the attention of our members. In the year 1854, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, after referring to "those sublime truths which are recorded in the Holy Scriptures," thus continues: "In these invaluable writings we find the only authentic record of the early history of our race, the purest strains of devotional poetry and the sublime discourses of the Son of God. Their frequent perusal was therefore especially urged upon our younger members, who were encouraged to seek for the guidance of Divine Grace, by which alone we realize in our ex-

* See Barclay's Apology, Prop. iii, § v.

perience the saving truths they contain." In 1860, the same Yearly Meeting, addressing its members in reference to the Scriptures, says, "In these are contained the recorded experience of the righteous in former ages, the sublime precepts of the blessed Jesus, and the history of his spotless and perfect example. In every age of the Christian Church these precious writings have afforded to pious and dedicated minds instruction that promoted their spiritual progress and encouragement to press forward in the path of duty."

In 1863, the following minute of Baltimore Yearly Meeting was issued to its subordinate meetings and members, viz.: "We have been reminded that this Yearly Meeting has, at various times, issued advices to its members inciting them to the frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures, the authenticity of which has always been acknowledged by the Society of Friends. We believe it is not the part of true wisdom to dwell upon defects, whether real or imaginary, in the sacred records but rather to use them as they were intended, 'for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,' remembering that it is only