

# Discussion Handout for Quaker Heritage Day 2011

## Session 1: Quakers, Culture and Mission

The old parlor stereopticon set two pictures before the viewer, who would then see the depth dimension in otherwise flat photographs. Authentic Christian faith is prophetic faith; it sees the present in correct perspective only when it construes the present by means of the prefiguring past (God's past) while at the same time construing it by means of the prophetic future (God's future). "This is that" declares the present relevance of what God has previously done, while "then is now" does not abolish the future but declares the present relevance of what God will assuredly do. Moreover, these two, typical past and prophetic future, are not alternative visions between which to choose; they are and must remain one vision, one faith, and hope. (McClendon, Doctrine: 69)

Scriptural Text: Luke 4, Luke 10, John 1 & 14

Queries:

- What are the ways you've understood and experienced "mission?"
- Do you think the church has a mission? What is it?
- What kind of contexts are we swimming in? What are the cultural challenges that face us as humans and as Quakers?
- Do you think 'mission' might have consequences for renewal among Friends?

## Session 2: Participation in the Quaker Tradition

"The mission of the church is not to enlarge its membership, not to bring outsiders to accept its terms, but simply to love the world in every possible way--to love the world as God did and does." Parker Palmer

Scriptural Text: Luke 10:1-9; Philippians 3:14-15; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7;

Queries: In what ways might the Quaker tradition be mission-oriented?

Pair Share Opening Quote:

In the power of life and wisdom, and dread of the Lord God of life and heaven and earth, dwell;...and be a terror to all the adversaries of God, and a dread, answering that of God in them all, spreading the Truth abroad, awakening the witness, confounding deceit, gathering up out of transgression into the life, the covenant of light and peace with God. Let all nations hear the word by sound or writing. Spare no place, spare not tongue nor pen, but be obedient to the Lord God and go through all the world and be valiant for the Truth upon earth; tread and trample all that is contrary under.

Keep in the wisdom of God that spreads over all the earth, the wisdom of the creation, which is pure. Live in it...Bring all into the worship of God...people must be led out of captivity up to God,...and do service to him and have unity with him, with the Scriptures and with one another.

And this is the word of the Lord God to you all, and a charge to you all in the presence of the living God; be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.

Queries for Discussion:

- What stands out to you about what we just read?
- In what ways might Fox's statement inform a Quaker perspective of mission?
- How might local Quaker meetings be transformed by a missional reading of this text?

### **Session #3: Enacting the New Creation**

“Mission is not perhaps so much being sent as being called, for he whom we follow is already present wherever we are; not so much the activity of going and doing and speaking, as the response of becoming and being channels through whom God acts and the word is spoken.” --Janet Scott

Scriptural Text: Ephesians 2; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Gal. 6:15

Six Characteristics of participatory culture: Authenticity, Remix, Cultural Producers, Collective Intelligence, Decentralized Leadership, Alternative Social Community

Small Group Queries:

1. What are some of the ways in which you find your meeting already reflecting a participatory culture? (How might you build on what you have?).
2. What are some of the ways you might be able to nurture more participation in your meeting? (In other words, are there parts you're drawn too that you'd like to see cultivated more?).
3. How might the answers to 1 and 2 help to foster renewal among your group?