

Now concerning the Measure of the Spirit, as God has dealt to every man.

By George Fox

In Rom 12:3, it is written, 'For I say, through the grace given to me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith.' So you may see here, that the apostle himself would have the church not to presume to understand any further, but as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith; if they did, they presumed above their measure. So, to understand as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith, this keeps every man in the faith and in the grace, in their measure. But you, who do not have the same faith, which works by love, which Christ is the author and finisher of, and walk despitefully against the spirit of grace, and turn from it into wantonness, are in the presumption, who would understand without the faith, and the grace and light. You go against the apostle's doctrine, and the measure of faith, the measure of which God has dealt to every man. So every man must look at the grace and faith that God has dealt to him through Christ Jesus, who is the author of it and finisher, and understand and walk by it, which was the practice of the true church, and exhortation of the true ministers.

And the apostle said, in 2 Cor 10, how the 'weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God to cast down strong holds, casting down the imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every high thought, to the obedience of Christ,' ... Now, here was the spiritual warfare, and the spiritual weapons; 'for,' he said, 'we dare not make ourselves of the number, nor compare ourselves to them who praise themselves; but they understand not that they measure themselves with themselves:' this was a wrong measure and understanding, which the apostle dared not make himself of the number of such as did so, who kept to his own measure, neither can they who keep to the measure which God has distributed to them. But do not you now measure yourselves by yourselves, and praise yourselves, who do not own the measure, and do not come to the measure that God has distributed? And do not you say, 'that God does not distribute directly to men now, as he did in the apostles' days?'

And further, the apostle said, 'but we will not rejoice in things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule, wherewith God had distributed unto us a measure to reach even unto you.' So here the apostles kept their joy within the measure of the rule that God had distributed to them: for he said, 'for we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure.' So here again he kept within the measure God had distributed to them; and likewise, would have the church to do the same.

And further, the apostle said, 'not boasting of things which are without our measure, that is, of other men's labors; and we hope when your faith shall increase, to be magnified by you, according to our rule, abundantly.' Now, see here what was the apostle's rule, which they stretched not beyond, and did not boast out of it, nor did boast of other men's labors; but this measure and this rule was what God had distributed unto them. You who have gone from this rule and measure, are you not boasting of other men's labors; (namely scriptures), of the prophets and apostles, and call that your rule, and praising yourselves and measuring yourselves, and stretching yourselves besides that measure and rule that God has distributed to them, and which the apostle was in, and exhorted others unto. Are you not also boasting of things besides this measure and rule which God distributes to his church and to the apostles. So by this measure and rule they were to walk, which God had distributed to them, then and now, by which measure and rule they knew the scriptures and the things of God, which rule and measure God had distributed to them.

And further, the apostle said, that 'they did not boast of things beyond our measure, that is, over other men's labors, or in work already done in another elsewhere,' or prepared already. So here you may see, the apostles kept to the rule and line that God had distributed to them. Now, do not you rejoice and boast in other men's completed work these days; that is, in things made ready to your hands, and prepared already, and say, 'that is your rule,' (namely), the prophets', Christ's and the apostles' words [in the scriptures], which are other men's labors and works, for which they suffered, for speaking forth the apostles', prophets' and holy men's labors, which you rejoice and boast in, which are other men's results, prepared already to your hands.

And are not you against the measure of the light, of the grace, of the spirit of the faith now, which we witness, with the apostles? You persecute those to whom God has distributed a measure of the rule, which we rejoice in and walk by, with which we know you are boasting in other men's labors, that are made ready to your hands. But let him who rejoices, rejoice in the Lord, who distributes this measure. He who praises himself, and looks on things after the outward appearance, is not credited; but he whom the Lord praises, who walks according to the measure of the rule, as God has distributed to him; in this God has the glory out of all hearts. The vain rejoicer, boaster, and comparers of

themselves with themselves, who are not wise, and will boast of other men's labors and lines, and works made ready to their hands — that is kept down for that boast and joy is not of the Lord, neither he who praises himself. I say, that is kept down by the measure of the rule which God distributes; in which measure and rule God has his praise.

And the apostle said 2 Cor 12:6-7, 'for fear that any man should think of me above that he sees in me, or hears of me, for fear that I should be exalted above measure,' ...

Now here you see the humility the apostle was in; he would have people, or the church, not to think of him above what they see in him, (namely), his measure, though he saw things not fit to be uttered; and when the messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him, and he besought the Lord three times, the Lord's answer was to him, 'my grace is sufficient for thee, and my power and strength is made perfect in weakness;' and in this strength, power and grace did the apostle rejoice, and in his infirmities.

And the apostle said in Eph 4:7, 'but to everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.' And by this measure of grace, the gift of Christ, they did walk, and so must all true christians, by which they must walk, if they will grow in grace; and if they grow up to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, they must grow in grace.

And in Gal 6:14-16, the apostle said, 'God forbid I should rejoice, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world; for in Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creature; and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy upon the Israel of God.'

George Fox

Concerning the Rule

Now mark, you professors of the letters, that say, 'the scripture is your rule;' was not circumcision of the letter of the scripture? And yet the apostle said, 'it avails nothing, but a new creature; and what the apostle rejoiced in, was the cross of Christ, in which he was crucified to the world, and the world to him. Is not the cross of Christ the power of God? Are not as many as walk according to this rule, and rejoice in it, (namely), the cross of Christ, and the new creature? I say, **as many as walk according to this rule**, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. Gal 6:14-16. For the apostle said, 'the cross of Christ is the power of God;' so that the rule of the new creature in Christ he sets forth to be the rule. [Christ in the new creature is the rule]. You who have the form of

godliness, and deny the power thereof, and the having the spirit that gave it forth now in your days, and call it your rule, and yet walk quite contrary to it, are to be turned away from; yet not turn away from the scriptures, but from you, who walk contrary to them, and the spirit that gave them forth.

And the apostle said in Phil 3:16, 'nevertheless, in that whereunto we are come, let us proceed by one rule, that we may mind one thing; for he had told them with weeping of such as were enemies to the cross of Christ, whose end is damnation, whose God is their belly, and glory in their shame, who mind earthly things.

Now were not they enemies to the rule then, which was the cross of Christ, the power of God? And what was this rule they were to walk by? Was it not what God had distributed to them, the spirit of God? For these, whose belly was their God, and gloried in their shame, and minded earthly things, whose end was damnation; these were a kind of christians, which it is to be feared there are too many such now, who were enemies to the cross of Christ, which is the power of God, who were to be turned away from. Was not the grace of God, which God said should be sufficient for Paul, and his strength made perfect in his weakness; was not this grace and strength a sufficient rule for Paul?

And does not the apostle say, 'let the peace of God [Christ] rule in your hearts by faith who shall rule all nations with a rod of iron?' so is not he a sufficient rule in the heart by faith, and a sufficient rule to rule all nations, Rev 12:5, yes, and sufficient to rule the heathen. Rev 19:15.

And does not Christ say, 'I will send you the spirit of truth, which shall lead you into all truth, and bring to your remembrance the words I have spoken unto you?'

Is not this spirit a sufficient rule, that leads into all truth?

And in Neh 9, the Lord gave his good spirit to the people, 'his good spirit to instruct them, and they rebelled against it.'

And were not they reprov'd for so doing? and was not that a sufficient rule? Are not they the sons of God who are led by the spirit of God? Rom 8:14. Is not that a sufficient rule to lead and guide?

And the Lord [through John] said, 'he who has the Son, has life.'

And is not here a sufficient rule?

And John said, 'these things I have written unto you, concerning those who deceive you; but the anointing which you have received of him, dwelleth in you;

and you need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teaches you all things, and is true, and is no lie.'

And is not this a sufficient rule, this teacher, that people might see the deceivers, and shun them?

And the Lord said, 'I will put my laws in your minds, and write them in your hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.' Is not this law and new covenant a sufficient rule to know God by? Was not the Holy Spirit a sufficient rule, which led Moses and the prophets to give forth the scriptures? Was not the Holy Spirit a sufficient rule, which led the disciples and apostles of Jesus Christ into all truth; and to see the fulfilling of the law and prophets in Christ, and brought to their memories the words that Christ spoke, and afterwards to record them? Is not the same Holy Spirit a sufficient rule for all christians now to know God, and Christ, and the scriptures, and lead them all into the truth of them; in which Holy Spirit they must pray and have their fellowship, seeing no man knows the things of God without the spirit of God, which searches all things, and they are spiritually discerned, and the natural man perceives them not, they are foolishness to him; and how can they be his rule, when they are foolishness to him, as in 1 Cor 2:10-14.

And what rule had Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Moses, before scriptures were given forth? Did not they walk by faith, which was the gift of God, yes, and to be perfect? Was not Abraham commanded to walk before him, and be perfect, which perfection you cannot attain unto by walking in the oldness of the letter, for you must serve God in the newness of life, and not in the oldness of the letter, Rom 7:6. 'for the letter killeth, but the spirit gives life.' 2 Cor 3:6. And so, was not that faith a sufficient rule for all the old fathers to walk by? Must not we walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham [who obeyed God's voice]? Rom 4:12.

And the apostle said, 'but he is a Jew who is one within, and the circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.'

So, is not he a christian who is one within, in the heart (and not in the letter), only, whose praise is of God, and not of men, seeing that many may have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, which are to be turned away from; may not those say they are christians, as the Jews said they were Jews, and were not, but were the synagogue of Satan?

And the apostle said, 'henceforth, know we no man after the flesh, yes, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him so no more.' 2 Cor 5:16.

And their fellowship stood in the spirit, and they were to know Christ and one another in the spirit, and to keep the unity of the spirit, which is the bond of peace, yes, even of the Prince of princes' peace. But those who deny the having of that spirit the apostles were in, do not know Christ, nor the fellowship of the saints, nor the Prince of princes' peace.

And the apostle said, in Rom 15:18, 'for I will not dare speak of any thing which Christ has not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed.' Now mark, did not he keep to the measure of the rule which Christ had wrought in him?

Now come, all you priests and professors in Christendom, and try yourselves by the scriptures, which you say is your rule. How dare you speak anything, to make people obedient in word and deed, that Christ has not wrought in you or by you? Are not you boasting of other men's lines and labors, that other men have made ready for your hands? Do not you lack the fear of God in your hearts, as was in the apostles, who dared not speak anything but what Christ had wrought by them to make people obedient by word and deed? Ought not the apostle here to be your example? Then Christ would have the glory of what he works by you in people, and in you; and your own wills would be laid in the dust. Therefore, is not all what you speak to people, what Christ has not wrought in you and by you, like the false prophets, using your tongues, and the false apostles boast of other men's lines.

And the apostle said, in Rom 3:24. 'and we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.'

And in Rom 4:12,16, 'but unto them also that walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham:' and is not this a rule sufficient?

And in Rom 8:1-2, 'now there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, **who walk** not after the flesh, but **after the spirit**; for the law of the spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of sin and death.'

Now, is not this spirit a sufficient rule to walk by? But you who say it is not the rule, do not you remain under condemnation, under the law of sin and death, pleading for it, and not for freedom by the law of the spirit in Christ on this side the grave.

And further, the apostle said, 'but if you mortify the deeds of the flesh by the spirit, you shall live.' Therefore is not this spirit a sufficient rule to walk by?

And in 2 Cor 5, the apostle said, 'for we walk by faith, and not by sight.' [Mark, not by sight.] The church was not to walk by sight, but by faith, which Christ is the author of; and is not this sufficient? They who walk by faith, walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, his faith, which was before scriptures were written? Is not this a sufficient rule for all the faithful, which is testified to in the scriptures, and was before scripture was written; and which scripture is to be believed, and fulfilled, and practiced, etc.

And Eph 2:8, '*by grace are you saved, through faith, and not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*' So is not that sufficient to walk by, which saves?

And in 1 John 1:7. '*If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanses us from all sin.*'

So is not this light sufficient to preserve the fellowship, by walking in it? Is there any cleansing from all sin by the blood of Jesus Christ, but first they must walk in the light? There may be talk about the blood of Christ, and yet a pleading for the body of sin and death, and imperfections to the grave; so that only talking about the blood of Christ will do them little good, while pleading for their body of sin and death, and imperfections to the grave; that there they may be all buried in the pit together, where there is no repentance; and give a man ten or twenty shillings to preach them a funeral sermon. As it is in Heb 9:27. 'it is appointed unto men, that they should once die, and after that come to judgment.' And therefore, consider and mark this, and quench not the spirit which God has given you to profit withal; and do not resist the Holy Spirit, which Christ has sent to lead you into all truth, and to reprove you; and hate not the light which Christ has enlightened you withal, that you may believe in it, and walk in it, that you may become children of the light, for fear that it be your condemnation. For is not the light sufficient to lead you, and guide you, and rule you, and to give you the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus? Is not that the treasure which the saints had in their earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us. 2 Cor 4:7. And rebel not against the spirit, which God has given you to instruct you, and to know the things of God by, and that in the spirit you may have fellowship with the saints for if you rebel against his good spirit, what are all your fellowships good for? Is not God's spirit sufficient? Does not Christ say, 'it is the spirit of the Father, who speaks in you?' Is not that sufficient to rule and to guide, and to serve and worship God in, in spirit and truth?

And did not the apostle say, in Rom 1:9, that he 'served God in the spirit.' And is it not the duty of all christians, to serve God in the spirit? Is not that a sufficient rule, which will teach them to know how to serve God, (namely, his holy spirit), by which spirit they may know God, and Christ, and the scriptures, and know one another in the spirit, and in it have fellowship, and so keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, yes, the bond of the Prince of princes', King of kings', and Lord of lords' peace, which none can take away from them?

And does not Christ say, 'those who worship the Father, must worship him in spirit and in truth? Is that not a sufficient rule by which worship him; and which is the grace of God, which brings salvation, which teaches the saints? Is this not a sufficient rule to teach and to establish the heart, and season your words, and bring salvation?

And the apostle said, Rom 8:26, 'likewise the spirit also helps our infirmities.' So is not this spirit sufficient, that helps people's infirmities? 'and the spirit itself makes intercession.'

And in Gal 5:16, 'I say, walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.'

And is not this a sufficient rule for people to walk by?

And the apostle said, in Gal 2:19-20. 'for I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God; I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' [Mark,] This should be every Christian's life and living.

George Fox

Worcester-Prison, the 9th day of the 11th month, 1676.

Imprisoned for obeying the command of Christ, and the apostle James's doctrine, who say, 'swear not at all.' Mat 5:34-37, Jam 5:12