

George Fox:

O friends! keep out of that state, which is out of and below the chaste nature; for all unchasteness, by the power of the Lord and his truth and light, is to be judged. Therefore live in the truth and in the light of God, that keeps you all chaste, for in that is the unity, and out of that is the war. For from the lusts are the wars and strife [James 4:1]. Oh! keep over that nature, that purity may flow, and righteousness spread, and truth flourish, and love and peace abound in and amongst all the family of God. Keep down the unchaste, keep down the adulterous eye [2 Pet 2:14], and keep down the lust of the flesh, which is not of the Father but of the world [1 Jn 2:16]; and lust is against the spiritual fellowship, and spiritual union, and spiritual dominion, for that would be as a lord, to lord above the spirit, which the spirit of God is Lord over, and judges it. Keep down the lustful heart and eye, for that leads from God, and joins with the adulterate in any thing, or with any thing that is evil; keep truth and a pure conscience [1 Tim 3:9], and there ye have an unspotted life [James 1:27], in which ye may see over the spotted life, where no chastity nor purity is. Therefore live in that which keeps you chaste, then ye follow Christ the Lamb; for there are the holy joy, and peace, and comfort, and unity known, in the life and fellowship with the God of life. For what is the cause of all the lusting spirits to envy, and of the wisdom that is sensual, earthly, and devilish [Jas 3:15], but a living and a going out from the truth and the life? Which (truth and life) is the mark of the high calling of God in Christ [Phil 3:14], where the peace is. And so the spirit of this world lusts to envy [Jas 4:5], it lusts to strife, it lusts to contention [Hab 1:3], it lusts against the spirit of God; the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, and the lusts of the flesh [1 Jn 2:16], clothed with flesh, covered with flesh, not with the spirit, such are unchaste, and follow the lust, not the Lamb, and so live in that which the war proceeds from, and in strife and contention. And, therefore, mark that spirit with the eternal power of God, for it judges with evil thoughts [Jas 2:4], being in the earth, and thinks all to be like itself, being in the bad, and in the lust, and in the adultery; it judges all to be like itself.

Oh! therefore mind the holy life, the chaste life! That is the bride's clothing, by which she adorns herself for her husband [Isa 61:10, Rev 21:2], Christ Jesus. Therefore live in that which keeps your peace, there is your life and dominion; that weeds may not grow, nor brambles, but that they all may be cut down and weeded out. For those grow through the liberty <146> of the flesh [Gal 5:13], and by that ye come to be darkened, and lose your discerning and feeling; and there gets the beam into the eye, by which ye come to judge with that judgment which is for judgment [Mat 7:2-5], which should be judged down by the spirit of truth and peace. And so live in the same peace with God, and one with another, and have fellowship in the chaste life, and in the spirit and power of God. And keep down that which lusts to envy, and strife, and contention [James 4:1], for that will not, nor cannot bear true judgment, but will flatter and fawn, and sow dissention; and so in the end will bring dishonour both to God and his people. That can never abide true judgment or sound doctrine [2 Tim 4:3], for that adulterates from God, and joins in marriage with that which is adulterated from God. And so the unchaste follows the whore and the adulterer, and goes to the marriage supper of the adulterer and the whore; but the chaste virgin follows the Lamb, and goes to the marriage supper of the Lamb [Rev 19:9]. Therefore all live in the chaste life, by which ye may follow the Lamb of God to his supper and marriage. And keep ye all out of that from whence contentions, and strife, and wars arise, which are the fruits of them that live in the lust, which is seen with the everlasting power, the ground from whence strife, and contention, and wars come, the unchaste, which live in the lust; which lust will defile all that receive it. Therefore, all Friends every where, your fellowship is to be in the gospel, the power of God [Rom 1:16], and in the spirit, the fruits of which is peace [Gal 5:22]; in which ye all will be kept in dominion, pure and chaste to God, and one towards another. For all that come to the sabbath of rest must put off their old clothes, which they have worn in their old works, labours, and travels. For six days the Jews were to labour, but the seventh day was their rest [Exo 20:9], which is perfection.

G. F.