

Worship Sharing 10-25-22

Sacrament

“Alongside Friends’ stress on the primacy of God’s action, we set great store by the centrality of ordinary experience. We agree with the witness of the universal church that mystical experiences are attested by the moral quality of people’s lives. The whole of our everyday experience is the stuff of our religious awareness: it is here that God is best known to us. However valid and vital outward sacraments are for others, they are not, in our experience, necessary for the operation of God’s grace. We believe we hold this witness in trust for the whole church.”

London Yearly Meeting, 1986

“To Fox and the early Friends the whole of life seemed sacramental, and they refused to mark off any one particular practice or observance as more sacred than others. They took the same stand with regard to Sunday, or First Day; it was not in itself more holy than Saturday or Monday; every week-day should be a Lord’s Day. Their whole attitude was gloriously positive, not negative. They were ‘alive unto God’ and sensed him everywhere.

We do not say that to observe the sacraments is wrong, but that such observance is not essential to wholehearted Christian discipleship and the full Christian experience. We do not judge our fellow Christians to whom the outward sacraments mean so much. Rather do we wish, by prayerful fellowship with them, to be led unitedly with them to a deeper understanding of what underlies those sacraments, and so to share a richer experience of the mind of Christ.”

Gerald K Hibbert, 1941

“We need to guard against under-valuing the material expressions of spiritual things. It is easy to make a form of our very rejection of forms. And in particular, we need to ask ourselves whether we are endeavouring to make all the daily happenings and doings of life which we call ‘secular’ minister to the spiritual. It is a bold and colossal claim that we put forward – that the whole of life is sacramental, that there are innumerable ‘means of grace’ by which God is revealed and communicated – through nature and through human fellowship and through a thousand things that may become the ‘outward and visible sign’ of ‘an inward and spiritual grace’”

A Barratt Brown, 1932

Queries

How do these quotes speak to your experience?

In what ways have you experienced “innumerable means of grace” in daily living?

What practices help you feel “alive unto God” and connected to the experiences that may become the ‘outward and visible sign’ of ‘an inward spiritual grace’?