

A DISCOURSE FOR FRIENDS OF VIRGINIA AND
CAROLINA BY JOSEPH GLAISTER

Edited by JAMES BRANCH CABELL

The following Discourse "ffor friends of Virginia and Carolina," very happily preserved in the Lower Meeting Records of the Virginia Quakers, is presented on its intrinsic merits, as a singularly beautiful piece of prose written by an early Virginian colonist. The spelling has, of course, been modernized, and punctuation (of which the original is wholly guiltless) has been supplied, as well as here and there a word which the context shows to have been omitted.

Dear friends, to whom is the salutation of my love in Christ Jesus, fellowship:—in which I wish you all perfection, that you may so grow up in His divine life, that by the same you may know the sure Rock, and build and abide thereon; and that so, the devil may not unsettle you, neither by his roaring nor transforming.

Thus you may stand in the faith, and run in patience the race that is set before; still looking unto Him Who knows all your needs and wants, and takes continual care for His own family; and Who hath solemnly promised by His own arms to uphold all them that do faithfully rely on Him for strength, in times of want, in times of weakness, in times of poverty of spirit, and of bodily sickness, and of exercise of soul.

Oh, He is good, can all those say that have been deeply bowed in many exercises. Verily can these say, *Had not the Lord been on our side, we had fainted*.

We, too, had staggered, we had fallen, and had been hopeless and helpless, and in a miserable condition, without the smiles and favor of God, without the assistance and help of the spirit of Christ, and not partaking nor knowing of the Covenant of Promise and the Commonwealth of Israel.

But since the Lord hath been pleased to call us, to manifest His grace in our hearts and the truth which comes by Christ

Jesus, and shines in our hearts, to give us knowledge of Heavenly things relating to salvation and peace of the soul with God: I say, since God hath dealt so kindly, and so gently, and hath shown us so many favors, let all be faithful and valiant for Him.

Upon this earth let all that are fathers stand up, purging their houses from idols, and their hearts from covetousness; holding faith and a pure conscience, and ruling in the love and fear of God, as His stewards, in all their families' doings, and in their duties to their children and servants, as those that look to be called to give an account, by their great Lord and Master. So that in that day you may be glad your hands are clear, and your hearts pure from all defilements.

And take heed in time, all you that are endowed with plenty in this world, that you answer the true end of life in bestowing these things on you; so that your garment may cover the naked, and your morsel feed the needy. And take heed that the poor may be helped by you when they are young, to trades and education, so that as they grow up they may beseech the Lord to reward you with a blessing.

Thus may you be as fathers to the fatherless, and make the widow's heart to sing for joy. So shall the blessing of him that is ready to perish come upon you, and the dew of Heaven shall lie continually about your branches.

So may we have no carnal, earthly, selfish spirits amongst us: that is, such folk as come saying what they have is their own, and so rob God of His honor. *For the cattle of a thousand hills are mine*, saith the Lord. And who dare deny His right or contradict Him?—as do those that never answer His end Who loves them, and are unfaithful stewards.

God will certainly call and judge them for their work, and pronounce that fearful yet just sentence:—*Cast out the unprofitable servant into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth for evermore.*

Let all be careful to keep their minds from surfeiting and drunkenness, and from the cares of their life: with a watchful eye continually fixed upon the things that are laid up in store for the righteous, with which God, the righteous Judge of all, will

reward the faithful; giving them joy, and every lasting comfort and consolation, in a world without end.

And let those that have lesser enjoyment of worldly things be sure to hold fast the full employment of life. Keep close to that power by which the Lord did at the first open your understandings; so that thankfulness and faithfulness to God may be the study of your minds.

And do the parts of God's service without girding at any others: for it was no excuse for the man who had the one talent, that his Lord had given five unto his fellow. Just and righteous was and is that blessed Hand that did reward the improver of the five with being set over so many cities. He had that blessed sentence,—*Enter thou into the joy of the Lord.*

This is the rest of the people of God, their travail and labor, and their hearts' desire. And it is their continual prayer to the most high and holy Lord, that they may rest in this joy, feeding on the Life springing up in them, fitting them for future glory, rejoicing in the Cross, standing steadfast in the course of God, honoring Him, preferring one another, and submitting themselves to the elders in Christ that have ruled well, and who deserve double honor.

Remember our ancient testimony against hireling priests, for which many faithful brethren have suffered by long imprisonment unto death; lest any by putting dainties into their mouths bring the blood of those blessed and valiant soldiers upon them.

And take due care about your marriages, that none be passed and recorded amongst you but such as are blameless and clear, and both in unity — unity both with the man and the woman.

Make just payments in due time; and keep out of the fellowship of drunkards and swearers, and all that tends to hurt our blessed testimony.

Watch against self, that great monster: for it is the great enemy, even that of our own house. And let none seek his own honor, but God's.

So will God honor His people with that which is lasting and abiding, and which is not of this world, but outlasts all, and

stains it and all the pride and power of man. This shall dwell upon the soul, and shall enter the new Jerusalem; and shall be the Saints' crown, when kings shall bring their glory thither, who have an earnest of this life in their enjoyments here.

Press ye on, for nearly are ye related to God. Ye are His husbandry and His delight: for it is as with the children of men; ye are as the apple of His eye and His friends if ye do His commands.

My soul beseeches Almighty God to send His blessing with a strong arm, that it may rest on you to His glory. And I remain your souls' friend, desiring you to keep to the Cross. So may the God of all peace be with you all. Amen.

For friends of Virginia and Carolina: to be read in the fear of the Lord. Eaglesfield, the 23 day of the 12mo, 1707.

JOSEPH GLAISTER, author of the foregoing, came from Cumberland, England, to Virginia, as a Quaker preacher, before 12 September 1702, on which date he took part in the Yearly Meeting of the Quakers in Virginia. The ensuing five years he seems to have spent in and about Nansemond County. In 1707 he revisited England, where the preceding address was written: and on 25 September 1707, received credentials from "the Quarterly Meeting of Pardshow Cragg in Cumberland, old England," as a "faithful laborer in the Gospel" that "hath had very good service among friends here, where he was settled," empowering him "to remove himself and family into America, to live there." By May 1709 he was again in Nansemond, where to Benjamin Jordan's "testimony" as to his deceased mother, Margaret Jordan, was appended the following hardly less noteworthy bit of noble prose, as an "addition by Joseph Glaister":

If the righteous be had in everlasting remembrance; and it be verily so that no man shut a door in the house of the Lord, nor kindle a fire upon his altar in vain; nor any give a cup of cold water to a disciple of Christ in the name of a disciple, but shall have a plentiful reward at the hand of the Lord:—O Righteous and Eternal God! how then shall they be rapt in supernal joy and such consolation as is the recompense of the just, that have served the Lord with their all!—opening their doors and hearts to the faithful messengers and living ministers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and doing what they do as unto God and not unto man, knowing that of Him they have their reward.

Amongst the number of those servants of the Lord and the Church of Christ was our well-esteemed and serviceable friend Margaret Jordan, deceased: one who fulfilled that saying, *Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you shall find it.*

No question is there of her reaping of the fruits of her labors. Having her mind steadfastly bent to do good in her day, she continued in great service unto the Church unto her last in this low world. Now, being taken from her service here, as well as from all trouble that did or might attend her earthly pilgrimage, she is entered into such rest and peace as time will never wear out: and where she will ever have a plentiful and unprizable reward.

For so it was commended to the Church, as virtues of God's commanding, to minister to the saints, and diligently to follow every good work. Such service I do heartily desire may be studied by all that in the eyes of God would be more esteemed: and such service doth render men more happy, as they *diligently follow every good work*, than all worldly honors can render them.

By September 1710 — presumably about the time of his second marriage — Joseph Glaister had made his permanent home in Pasquotank County, North Carolina, where, as shown by a suit before the General Court in April 1713, he owned a plantation "lying on Nobbs Crook Creek." He was a member of the Pasquotank Monthly Meeting, but continued to preach to the Quakers in Nansemond. Giles Rainsford, then officially a missionary to the Indians in North Carolina, wrote from Pasquotank, 19 January 1715-6, concerning the difficulty of converting Quakers: "In Nansemond County, bordering on Carolina, I have . . . made ye ignorance of their great Apostle Joseph Gloster in a dispute appear to whole multitudes: & yet" — Rainsford rather pathetically adds — "yet their prejudice is such yt I fear there is no possibility to win upon 'em."

Joseph Glaister had married in England ——— Robinson (a widow), who with her unmarried daughter, Sarah Robinson, constituted his family in 1707. By this first wife he seems to have had no issue. He married, second, circa 1710, Mary, daughter of Henry Palin, Sr., of Pasquotank. Joseph Glaister died in February 1718-9: his will, dated 27 January 1718-9, was recorded in Pasquotank 12 March 1718-9. His second wife, presumably by much his junior, survived him more than twenty years: the will of Mary Glaister, dated 9 June 1740, was recorded in Pasquotank at the October Court of 1740.

Joseph Glaister had issue by Mary Palin two daughters, Ruth and Sarah. Of these, Ruth Glaister married Stephen Scott, and left descendants in

North Carolina. The other daughter, Sarah Glaister, in February 1728-9, married Wyke Hunnicutt of Surry and Prince George counties; and as is shown by the Gravelly Run Register and the Blackwater and Burleigh Records, had issue:

I. SARAH HUNNICUTT, born 30 May 1730; who in January 1753 married Samuel Bailey.

II. GLAISTER HUNNICUTT, born 27 April 1732, died 13 April 1781 (his will, dated 13 April 1781, was recorded in Sussex 10 October 1781), who married circa 1756 Jane, daughter of John Pleasants of Henrico, and had issue.

III. MARY HUNNICUTT, born 3 November 1735, died September 1739.

IV. ROBERT HUNNICUTT, born 11 June 1737, died September 1739.

V. RUTH HUNNICUTT, born 11 August 1740, who in November 1761 married Anselm Bailey.

VI. ROBERT HUNNICUTT, born 19 February 1742-3, who in July 1769 married Priscilla Hunnicutt, the widow of his cousin Robert Wyke Hunnicutt, and daughter of ——— Binford.

VII. WYKE HUNNICUTT, born 11 February 1745-6, who in June 1769 married Ann, daughter of Anselm Bailey of Surry, and left issue.

It is hoped in a future issue to include a more complete account of the Hunnicutt family, which has been resident in Surry since the establishment of the county in 1652.