

What Friends in New England feel about Recording Gifts

collected by Greg Williams

[Greg contacted a variety of Friends in New England. The following is his report on their responses to questions about recording.]

"The task before the new order of our time is not merely that of recovery but also that of advance, because if we are not going forward, we are already in decay. In the long run the only sound defense is - attack- , In order to attack we must find where our unused human resources are and learn to employ them in the struggle. Our strategy is to find new areas into which the fundamental Christian [and, or Quaker]¹ insights can penetrate and thus change the world. There is no good reason why the words of the risen Lord, "Go ye into all the world," may not be taken -intensively- as well as -extensively-. Usually we have interpreted this injunction in a geographical sense, but there is a deeper significance according to which they may mean that all phases of life, economics, political, cultural, and domestic, must be deeply penetrated. If our new order is to succeed in the recovery of the lost provinces it must be a society of penetrators in common life, not people separated from it..."
(pg)27- 28

Your Other Vocation Elton Trueblood(1952) Harper

1.[my addition - I would rather replace Christian with Quaker]

All Friends who responded felt Recording was

- an important, Sacred process.
- Not to be done lightly
- Not to be done at all if it is not done right.

Those Recorded felt it

- enhanced their own work,
- made them spiritually accountable,

It Made the recording Mtg. and Quarter, spiritually accountable.

All Friends are not equal, we grow and are gifted over time.

There is confusion between Pastoral System and Recording Gifts.
Recording is many, many, years older than Pastoral System.

Those recorded should be viewed as servants not "masters", not priests,

Confusion arises because today Recording of Gifts is often used to give

Quakers standing, in exterior ministry Prisons, Hospitals, etc...

There may be another way to give Friends "STANDING" that is not Recording.

We Friends have an understanding of Recording as it relates to vocal ministry, and travel in the ministry, there is history here. We need to grow in our understanding of what recording is.

Recording is an ongoing process... There should be an ongoing interaction between a Friend who has been recorded and his Monthly Meeting. There should be an ongoing interaction between a Friend who has been recorded and her Quarterly Meeting.

Recording comes from the "SPIRIT"! Who are we as Friends to ignore or deny?????

Friends need to come to terms with their Roots. Some Friends want to ignore their spiritual roots. But we are a Religious Society

Recording is a Spirit Filled Gift, There has to be a serious intent. It grows us spiritually as a community.

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There are so many resources within Quakerism that we do not do well. When I became a member I was given a copy of Faith and Practice..Blue Book London edition. It became an important part of my spiritual growth. Some Friends have never held a copy of Faith and Practice. "Engaging Scripture" by Michael Birkel is an excellent resource (Reading the Bible with Early Friends). Coming under the weight of a clearness committee provide spiritual nourishment for all engaged These are few examples. We need to educate our selves as Members and Attenders on range of Quaker Spiritual Realities. We need to learn and celebrate our history which will help us understand and practice our "Spirit - filled Gifts".

There are Friends who come to the Religious Society of Friends..wounded from other traditions, they can' stomach the thought of "Ministers in the house" I came to Friends with this baggage. While I have let that sword in my own life go many years ago. I found myself standing aside while I was still tender on particular issues.

Finally, I end up feeling that Recording of Gifts is an important reality of our religious tradition that should not be lightly done, nor easily given up.

Greg

"Our ministry must be not only to comfort but to challenge state, community, and church- not just to attend to the pain but to advocate for change; to be not just a vision but a voice; not simply to care for the victims of the world but also to change the institutions that victimize them. "If we had been holier people," the essayist Templeton teaches us, "we would have been angrier oftener."

"In the Heart of the Temple"

Joan Chittister

BlueBridge (Pg. 124)