

Quakers formed in the aftermath of the Reformation when Christians, both Protestant and Catholic were persecuting, and occasionally burning, one another because they each believed their own way of worship the only right one. This seemed to early Quakers as being directly contrary to the teachings of Jesus, and so we developed into a Society which avoids being dogmatic about all matters of belief and instead tries to lead a life in accordance with the spirit of Jesus' teachings. We base our Worship on silent searching. We do not have anyone to lead us, other than the Spirit which we believe is there, ready to speak to all, of any Faith, if we only listen.

Quakers see the most important part of our spiritual life as the way in which we treat one another, not the words we use to try and describe the 'Divine'. We believe that in worship all people are capable of being inspired by the divine presence, though we may not be able to live up to our understanding of where it is going to lead us. Such 'leadings' are not something given only to Priests or Elders. They may come to any, man or woman, adult or child at any time - though we find the stillness of our Meetings for Worship a helpful setting. We seek for words to be given us which we hope will be of help to ourselves or to others in the Meeting.

Our hope is to find the right way forward for our lives and to do this, not by listing all the things we know need to be done: healing the sick, helping the poor, comforting the afflicted. We know these are important and we try and play our part in this work, but we want to know what we are individually called to do. But to do this we each must ask the right question for ourselves - and we may not find it easily and, if found, we may find it too daunting. But we trust that the Spirit will not lay a burden on us too great to bear. But even with that risk ahead, we are sure that we should each continue to search for the question which is meant for us and to pray that we may have the strength to answer it honestly and courageously. A good starting point might be to ask: "What does love require of me today?"