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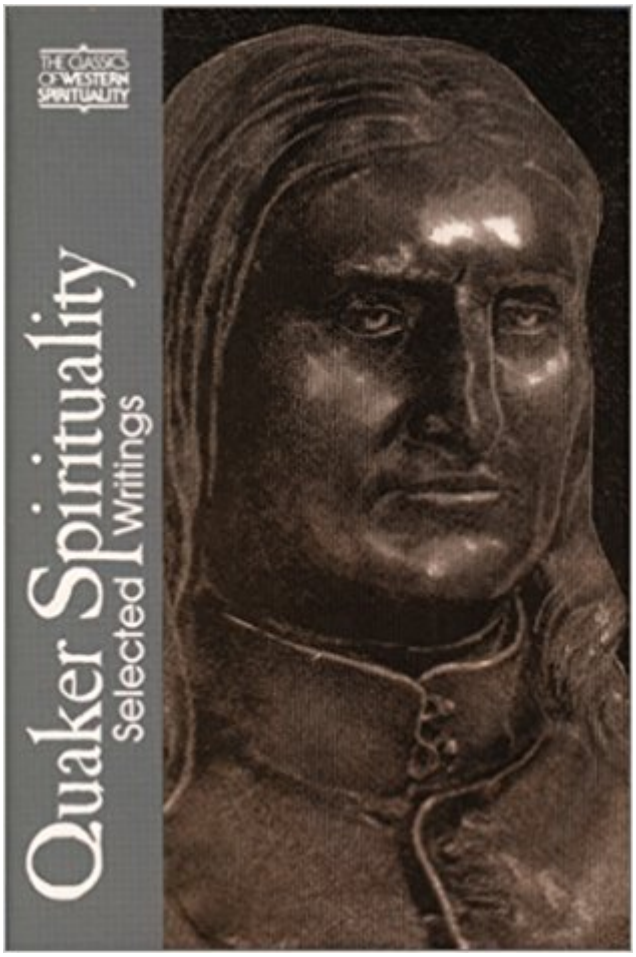
# Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings (Classics Of Western Spirituality)

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## Synopsis

Simplicity in forms of worship, opposition to violence, concern for social injustice, and, above all, a faith in the personal and corporate guidance of the Holy Spirit are characteristics of the spirituality of the people called Quakers. From their beginnings in the seventeenth-century England until today, the Quakers have attempted to radically live out their belief in the presence of God’s spirit within their hearts. In this book, Douglas V. Steere, the distinguished T. Wistar Brown Professor Emeritus from Haverford College, has assembled a comprehensive collection of Quaker writings. Included are selections from the journals of George Fox and John Woolman, Thomas Kelly’s Testament of Devotion, and the works of Caroline Stephen and Rufus Jones.

## Book Information

Series: Classics of Western Spirituality (Paperback)

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Paulist Press; First Edition edition (January 1, 1983)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0809125102

ISBN-13: 978-0809125104

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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## Customer Reviews

The Quakers are known for their deeply personal approach to spirituality. The writings of this volume convey just that. This is an absolutely beautiful collection of reflective writings by men and woman who found the Sacred within them. The anthology begins with selections from the "Journal" and the letters of George Fox (1624-1691), the figure around whom the original Quaker movement crystallized. This anthology includes some selections from the laudatory preface to Fox’s "Journal", written by none other than William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania. The anthology then includes the works of other Quakers from the 16th to the 20th centuries. One of the surprising gems of the book are the writings of Thomas Kelly (1893-1941), an American mystic whose life and work are too little appreciated. Kelly’s writings radiate with the power of his mystical experience. Overall, this is a

profoundly inspirational collection.

’s presentation makes it seem that this book: "Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings" (HarperCollins Spiritual Classics 2005) is the same as Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings (Classics of Western Spirituality)" the original 1983 Paulist Press book. It isn’t. It is abridged, to the point, in my opinion, of being much less useful as a brief overview of Quaker thought than the original book. even presents the first two reviews - which are of the Paulist Press 1983 book- as if they are reviews of this book from Harper Collins 2005., please don’t conflate these two books.The original 1983 book from Paulist Press is a great, albeit brief overview of Quaker writing. It brings together in one place, authors that can be hard to get a hold of; for example, Caroline Stephen.Five stars to the original 1983 bookOne star to the abridged 2005 edition for being too short to be a decent introductionZero stars to  for confusing the two.~~~

This collection of writings is a great addition for your library or reading list -- whether or not you are a Friend, you’ll find a collection of thought provoking writings with an interesting view.This book has both historical and philosophical views. Though much has changed in the world, and in the opinions of ’modern’ Quakers, the core beliefs remain the same -- those who are new to Quakerism, those considering it or those just interested in another view will find this book of help.

The Quaker movement began in the 17th century with George Fox (1624-1691); Fox wrote, "this is both our principle and practice, and hath been from the beginning, so that if we suffer, as suspected to take up arms or make war against any, it is without any ground from us... whereas men come against us with clubs, staves, drawn swords, pistols cocked, and do beat, cut and abuse us, yet we never resisted them, but to them our hair, backs, and cheeks have been ready. It is not an honour to manhood nor to nobility to run upon harmless people who lift not up a hand against them, with arms and weapons." (Pg. 107)American Quaker John Woolman (1720-1772) wrote that he believed "true religion consisted in an inward life, wherein the heart doth love and reverence God the Creator and learn to exercise true justice and goodness, not only towards all men but also towards the brute creatures." (Pg. 165) He also believed slavery "to be a practice inconsistent with the Christian religion." (Pg. 169)Caroline Stephen (1834-1909) of England states that the justification of Quakerism lies in "its energetic assertion that the kingdom of heaven is within us; that we are not made dependent upon any outward organization for our spiritual welfare... other Protestant sects ... transfer the idea of infallibility from the Church to the Bible. Nothing, I believe, can really teach us

the nature and meaning of inspiration but personal experience of it." (Pg. 247) She adds that a true mystic is conscious of having an inward life, "into which as into a secret chamber, he can retreat at will." (Pg. 248) Thomas R. Kelly (1893-1941) asserts that "Life is meant to be lived from a Center, a divine Center." (Pg. 304)This is a wonderful collection, and makes a marvelous introduction to Quakerism and its spirituality.

The introduction to Quaker Spirituality written by Douglas V. Steere is a thorough review of the history of the people known as Quakers. It includes reference to specific events and tensions that helped formulate the movement. After the introduction, there are selections from a variety of authors that give one a broad yet clear picture of the writings that remain the basis for Quaker spirituality and guidance for those living it out today. Reflecting on what is offered provides one a glimpse into a multifacted faith.

A great overview of Quaker Contemplative and Social Justice Witnesses! Care was taken to the selection of writers in this anthology, which represent the tradition well.-Amos Smith (author of Healing The Divide: Recovering Christianity’s Mystic Roots)

This is a great book for anyone who is interested in reading about Quakerism. I have several books about Quakerism and this one was a good addition to my collection. Easy read!

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