

WHAT CAN YOU SAY?



The mid-seventeenth century was a period of major unrest, questioning political and religious truths and values. The King had been beheaded, and Oliver Cromwell was in charge. George Fox was an itinerant preacher at that time, and on one occasion he was speaking in a Church, when one sentence, just four words, made a particular impact on one of his listeners and so remains remembered today. The sentence? 'What canst thou say?'. Perhaps not so challenging now as in the seventeenth century when political and religious truths were not questioned as they are now, but still a challenge today. Our attitude to life, politics, religion, social interactions, is our responsibility alone, and cannot be borrowed from our church, our party, our social group, our parents, the books we read. So that sentence, and each of the four words in it, are a challenge.

- 'What....'. Where do you stand on the important issues in life, spiritual issues, values concerning truth, equality, conflict, the environment, and hopes for the future?
- '....canst...' Which of these ideas, values, principles can you, personally, talk about with confidence?
- '....thou...'. Do you, personally, own these principles, values, beliefs, as yours, rather than just accepting something that has been suggested to you?
- '....say?' Are you prepared to talk about them, defend them, live them, walk with them, act upon them?

Some issues may not be those faced by George Fox 350 years ago, but the challenge is the same. Bad things happen when good people do nothing. Our values and principles are important and we should not hide them. Do we think about who we are, what we accept, what our responsibilities are, and how we can help create a better world?

Know your beliefs and values. Understand their consequences. Own them. Share them.
What.....CANST.....thou.....say – and what will you DO as a result?

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