

Worship Sharing 4-23-24

An Earthday meditation

A Quaker Testimony on Earth and Environment

...New testimonies emerge as the reasons for them and the underlying spiritual basis of action becomes clarified. One such area concerns our stewardship of the environment. For many Quakers what has been an “emerging” testimony to the environment has now become an established one, with close links to the peace testimony and the testimony of simplicity.

The world is a wonderfully rich resource for our material and spiritual needs. We should treasure it and preserve its capacity to sustain and inspire. That, in turn, calls for a creative responsibility towards the earth we have inherited and for proper sharing. It means seeing “that of God” in the natural world around us, and being moved by considerations other than commercial gain. Habitats and species are sacrificed to products and services which are often far from essential. The future is constantly sacrificed to the present and the needs of others to the wants of the self. It cannot be right to leave the world poorer than we found it in beauty or in the rich diversity of life forms, or to consume recklessly in the knowledge that our actions are bound to lead to future tragedy.

...Quakers recognize that their testimonies go against many of the current strands of economic, social, and political change. ...We may be called to a style of living and generosity of giving that we cannot yet attain. But we seek to engage with others and the natural world as part of a wider spiritual consciousness. In the depths of our silent waiting we find the place where words and deeds are one; our faith and our action are indivisible.

—from The Quaker Testimonies,

Testimonies Committee of Quaker Peace & Social Witness, Friends House, London, England.

Queries

1. Do I honor the Life of all living things, the order of nature, the wildness of wilderness, the richness of the created world?

2. Do I seek the holiness which God has placed in these things, and the measure of Light which God has lent them?

3. Do I, in all my proceedings, keep to that use of things which is agreeable to universal righteousness?
[John Woolman]