



Lecture 1951

William Penn

*Having  
Done All,  
To Stand*

*Clarence E. Pickett*

William Penn Lecture 1951

**And Having Done All, To Stand**

*Delivered at*  
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*Philadelphia*

by  
Clarence E. Pickett

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The name of William Penn has been chosen because he was a Great Adventurer, who in fellowship with his friends started in his youth on the holy experiment of endeavoring “to live out the laws of Christ in every thought, and word, and deed,” that these might become the laws and habits of the State.

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## And Having Done All, To Stand

“Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand the wiles of the devil, for we are not contending against flesh and blood but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Therefore, take the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand in the evil day, and *having done all, to stand.*”

These words were written by a conscientious objector more than nineteen hundred years ago. The Book of Ephesians is a letter of guidance and counsel to Christians living quite ordinary daily lives. It was not a chapel talk to college students; it was not written to prominent and distinguished citizens of the community. It was beamed toward people living an urban, community life, beset with many diversions and temptations in personal living. But what was even more subtle, they lived in a state which exercised increasing control over its subjects; which placed a premium on conformity to its demands. One of their chief temptations was to forget wherein lay their primary allegiance. Was it to the state or to God? And what did allegiance to God mean?

Paul’s own conduct was the best answer: wide and generous understanding of the laws and culture of the state, respect for its ingenious devices of preserving the peace and protecting its citizenry, but a fine sense of discrimination as to what

values were central and permanent and those which were temporary and expedient.

Of course, the setting was abnormal. The author was writing from a jail cell. A prisoner for conscience' sake sometimes sees moral and spiritual issues in sharper distinction than do men who are able to go about life freely. Nehru plumbed new and deeper springs of life for personal living and a broad concept of statesmanship while he was serving a prolonged prison sentence. James Naylor, the fanatic, left a record of some of the most precious findings about faith and life from his dark and clammy prison. So with Paul, who left this priceless letter from a Roman jail. Sometimes a study of pathology is the best way to understand the rules of health. And although few Friends are today in prison, most of us find ourselves dissenting from many of the generally accepted values held out before us by our government and by a majority of our neighbors and fellow citizens

We disavow from principle and from experience the idea that a heavily armed country is secure. We cannot believe that training most of our young men to kill other men, and to obey rather than to think, can do other than blight soul and mind for many of them. We cannot but harbor deep doubts as we see our material resources turned to swords (instead of to ploughshares) for the world to take. We see a kind of national arrogance threaten our heritage of friendship with other countries. And we are deeply dismayed when we hear our Protestant brothers approve of our defense forces using their engines of death—even the A-bomb—against people whom Christ loves equally with ourselves. It may be appropriate, therefore, for us to do some self-examination of

ourselves as members of the Society of Friends in an effort to lend some little measure of help to all of us in the bewildering decisions that we must make.

### *As Others See Us*

As a general observation, Friends have a well-recognized record as to *standing*. We like to be thought of as standing for something. But there is a fine warning in this phrase from Paul. He implies that there is a great deal of *doing* that should precede *standing*. Our problem often arises from the fact that the *doing* is in one generation and the *standing* in the next. We are here today representing at least two generations, and I should like to say a word both to the older and the younger generation.

I suppose one could say that *standing* is the natural tendency of those of us who are older, and *doing* the natural gift of youth. But the great temptation of elders is to *stand* for the status quo, and as Friends we have not escaped that tendency. If we examine what has happened to past generations of Friends, and if we seem somewhat critical, it is not as though we are saying how much better we would have done had we been in their place. It is only that we may gain warning from their weaknesses.

I have found it a salutary experience to read Catherine Drinker Bowen's *Life of John Adams* and to see Quakers through the eyes of John Adams looked upon as greedy merchants, prizing more highly business prosperity than national independence. We have learned to admire those who could not vote funds to promote the Revolutionary War and

therefore resign from the Pennsylvania Legislature. But many people less emotionally attached to this Society, which is so dear to us, believed that the attitude of Friends during the revolutionary period was because they feared its consequences upon their business. While there were a few individual exceptions, I think it would have to be agreed that Friends made little contribution during the period of highly inflamed public sentiment preceding the American Revolution toward a deep and profound effort to find ways in which the yearning of the colonies for freedom and the intransigence of the British Parliament and King could come to any agreement without the use of violence.

And when the issue of human slavery threatened to bring disastrous war to our country, the record of skill on the part of Friends in persistent and consistent efforts on the one hand to support the principle of human freedom, and on the other to find a way to attain that freedom without the use of violence is confined to a very few persons. Whittier did all he could for freedom and warned against war. He had all too little help from Friends in his crushing dilemma. But having done all could, he stood. Perhaps John Woolman, who did more than any other one person to clear members of our Society from slave holding, set the stage and lived in the spirit that, had it been more widely accepted by Friends, might have helped our country to avoid the War between the States.

My own forbears, facing the problem in North Carolina, along with most of their neighbors found a way out by going to the open, then largely untouched country, as they felt prepared by the Lord for His elect, in Indiana. There no

longer did they have to face the economic disadvantage of competing with a slave economy. And when in western Pennsylvania, a Quarterly Meeting of 2,000 Friends, faced the encroachment upon their peaceful, quiet, farming communities, of foreigners brought in to mine the newly discovered coal, they first tried to meet the moral problems raised by attempting to keep aloof from the new intruders in their communities. But the higher they raised the barriers, the more their youth became involved with the total community, and the Meeting lost its hold upon their young. During a period of ten years, more than a hundred young people were disowned from Meeting for conduct unbefitting to a Friend. Finally, in desperation every member of that large Quarterly Meeting fled to the West to get beyond the problem.

Now may I say again, I rehearse these well-known events not by way of criticism for our forbears, but by way of warning. All of these Friends took a *stand*, they supported the status quo. But there are very few “unpossessed lands” today. We rightly mingle freely with our fellows in business, professions, and socially. Many, if not most, of the non-Friends with whom we associate know little of our deepest concerns and our testimonies. May this not, therefore, justify an emphasis on the first phrase of these prophetic words of Paul, “And having done all”?

There can be no doubt about the inevitability of times when the only thing we can do is to *stand*. But standing is, however, only a measure of strength and social significance when it is preceded by “*having done all.*” While the period of quietism that invaded the Society of Friends resulted in deepening down and producing some great characters, for

many it was a refuge from facing the perplexing world about; for many it became a flight from reality. Preaching and the admonition of Friends of that period placed great emphasis on purity of dogma and clarity of testimony regarding marriage with non-Friends and participation in activities outside the confines of the Society. It sometimes also was characterized by stubbornness, immobility, unwillingness to look at new ideas, and a failure to search for understanding. Perhaps in the light of these historical illustrations, it might not be inappropriate for us to look at ourselves and to see whether it is possible for us to develop balance between social concern and inward conviction, between the intelligent effort to affect currents of society, while at the same time finding with some assurance that point at which we must take our stand and cannot accommodate ourselves to the political and social views and moods of the moment.

### ***What of Democracy?***

Out of the 150 years of ferment in Europe, the political wrestling of great and little statesmen, the injection into the scene of the industrial revolution, has come something we call democracy. Nobody quite knows what it is. Some people say that it means the right to choice; some put the emphasis on the central importance of free elections; others, the willingness of a minority to live under the decision of a majority. All accept, in theory at least, its emphasis on the central value of the individual. However one defines it, it now seems to be something of central and cardinal value to western civilization. We have fought wars to protect it, although, as so often happens, the use of violence to protect a

virtue proves to be the greatest threat to that virtue. But here we are, a minority, accepting the benefits of a society based on the democratic process, and yet time and again finding ourselves with a severe stop in our minds about accepting the will of the majority. It can be done when it does not disturb a deep-seated conviction. We can accept one president as against another, although that may be difficult. We may even accept one form of supporting our government by taxes as against another which we might prefer. But if, as often happens, the time might unhappily come again when the great majority of our fellow-citizens decide to go to war, what do we do then? And who will not recognize that at this moment in our national history this question is very much to the fore?

Perhaps one might here sound a warning something like this: Let him who stoutly rejects the validity of our country adopting a policy of military preparedness; or who will go to prison rather than be drafted; or who will see his business close down rather than make war material; or who will refuse to pay taxes for supporting an army,—during these precious moments, let him pause before decision and remind himself of the first part of this quotation from Paul, “and having done all.” The voice of the majority is by no means the same as the voice of God. But is it not laid upon us, and especially at this moment in history, to do our best to understand and interpret to our neighbors and any who will listen, the voice of God as we feel convinced of its validity?

## *Pastoral Service Needed*

For we live in a time characterized by divided personalities. Many of the men and women with whom we associate, on the one hand feel a patriotic duty to go along with the plans of preparedness which our government is laying upon us, but their sense of responsibility to their families and communities, their devotion to their religious life, and their own belief in the significance and power of prayer, pull them strongly in the direction of trying to understand those against whom our preparations are directed. On the one hand, they shout the fear of appeasement; on the other hand, they eagerly pray for understanding.

This is one of those precious moments when many men and women all about us, deeply troubled and seeming to support our new unprecedented commitment to the use of force, would like to find that richer and fuller confidence in the way of understanding. They would like to know the devices that could be used, the ways of expressing effectively to those who most fear us that we are concerned to do them well and not evil. Could it be that one of the chief functions of Monthly and Quarterly Meetings and of other Friendly gatherings should at this time be not only the transaction of important business incident to the life of the Meeting but turning the full intellectual and spiritual capacity of our membership so far as we can in the direction of learning to be people of understanding, interpreters of the deeper way of life, people who not only have peace within themselves, but who know how to bring peace to others?

The day may come when we shall have to *stand*; it may mean that we have to stand aside from the general current of life, to be non-participants in the main activity of our citizenry. This is not true today; it is the time when we ought to be doing all that we can to move away from the growing sense of fear, disavowing participation in such civil defense activities as tend to instill bitterness and hatred toward an enemy, stirring ourselves to support such political action as may prevent the passage of legislation to which we can only object. In fact, it could be true that in such activity we might at the same time so grow in spirit that if we find the day of non-cooperation at hand, we should have the inner strength and courage to make even *standing* a creative process.

There are some segments of our Society that have peculiar difficulties to face. In our midst are those who are engaged in manufacturing. In the normal course of events their products are used in ways that all society would approve, but with the approaching controls, are they to submit to government demands to produce war materials? Think with sympathy for a few moments of the dilemma that these Friends face. I wish that some of them might here interpret to us how deeply they search for an answer to their questions. They have employees who do not share their convictions about war and to whom they are responsible for providing employment. They have investors, also, who are in the same position. The last thing they want to do is to further the process of killing and butchering other human beings in the world. Do these men find help from their Monthly Meetings in facing their almost insoluble dilemma? Must they bear the burden of making these decisions without complete and deep

understanding of their fellows who are members of our Society? I know of no more perplexing problem than that which these Friends have to face. I yearn to be helpful. I do not see the answer, but now is the moment, my friends, when we should do all we can to be creative and helpful, knowing that the time may come when all that can be done is to *stand*—to object.

Closely related to this is something that touches all of us who earn. That is our taxes. We believe in the support of government. We know that government expenses have to be paid. We may be critical of lavish expenditures. We may object to political administration of tax funds. But how deeply are we concerned when money that we turn over to our government is used to build the engines of war with which to kill God's children? Thus far no clear-cut way of meeting this dilemma has been found. Those of us who are involved in the operation of Quaker institutions are conscious that we are even tax collectors in our scheme of deductions and that large portions of these taxes go to promote the cause of war. I cannot give the answer for anyone here. Some have refused as far as they could and have taken the consequences. Goods have been distrained, checking accounts have been invaded, to make good what the individual was unwilling to pay. But the problem remains. The danger is that we shall be too insensitive, not too venturesome. The lesson of history warns against too easy conformity, not against too much experiment with alternative methods. And it warns loudly against the complacency of our religious body as a whole.

What I am saying is that problems of this nature should be wrestled with in our Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, and in our Yearly Meetings, and in our small circles, as well as within our families, if we are to earn the right to *stand* if we are finally defeated. Recently, two of us had a conversation with two of the federal judges in the Philadelphia District concerning the problems that they faced as conscientious objectors came before them who refuse to register for the draft. There seemed to be only a blank dilemma for them to face. A conscientious objector who refuses to register has broken the law. They are under oath to interpret the law and to provide a decision on which administrators execute the law. There seems no alternative but to send the nonregistrant to prison. One of the men asked whether we knew about Friends investing in securities that were particularly lucrative in war time, raising the question to whether the senior membership of the Society of Friends who are beyond draft age live consistently to the testimony of those who refuse to register. We were unable to give an answer to that question, but it's a good question. Perhaps it is not amiss to have it directed to all of us, the senior brackets especially, that are here today.

Then there are of course the young men of draft age, and one might include the young women, who often feel as deeply on these matters as do the young men who are directly involved. We now have Selective Service and are threatened with Universal Military Training. The voice of the great majority of our citizens at this moment might seem to be in favor of Universal Military Training. Certainly there are few voices raised in strong opposition. And yet the few who have raised

their voices have been warmly received even by those who for the moment find themselves in disagreement. It is a precious time, therefore, my friends, when in these periods of uncertainty about the changing character of our citizenry, men and women yearn for counsel and for help.

It is not only that our young people face the disruption of college training or the beginning of family life. It is the question of whether one's life is dedicated to the service of humanity and of God or whether he is willing to have his energies trained in the art of killing. The young men are often able to think more clearly on these issues than are those of us who are older. But they need the fellowship and understanding, the sympathy, the prayers, the desire to see things through their eyes that maturity can contribute.

American youth has been stirred by great objectives. They have not only been moved by opportunities in the "Service" callings. They have learned through the study of Psychology and Sociology to find reason behind their nobler purposes. They have been taught that survival depends on sharing, that security comes through understanding, that outgoing love transforms the enemy into the friend. Then suddenly by law or decree a former national friend (China) becomes the enemy. And former enemies (Japan and Germany) become "necessary to our defense." And all of our elaborate machinery of cultural growth and our devices for international understanding must give way to a renewed confidence in force and violence as our only defense. Faced with such a great betrayal of tested knowledge it is no wonder that youth is confused and sometimes cynical.

## *Positions of Strength vs. Kingdom of Heaven*

In such a climate there is some satisfaction that our own country gives some recognition to conscience. And it is important that those who choose to avail themselves of exemption from military service be helped to develop a real alternative to the pursuit of violence and to continue in a variety of adventures in building the world of fellowship and of decency for people of all kinds, friend and enemy. To that end the best wisdom and the greatest financial support of which we are capable should be channeled into creative projects at home and abroad where the alternative values to force and violence can be demonstrated. We must not let this dream of the Kingdom of Heaven be engulfed by dependence on “positions of strength.” Some feel that conscription itself is the usurpation by the state of a right not belonging to it and that they must resist registration. Having done all, they “*stand*.” To those for whom this course is clear, far from being negative, their *stand* may prove the most powerful witness possible for them, not only against conscription but for freedom of conscience.

Then there are other things we may well consider which affect us all, younger and older. A hundred years ago, Friends deeply convinced of the value of their way of worship built in this great city a number of Meeting Houses. They were built to accommodate Friends in great numbers who lived in the neighborhood about them. They served that purpose well. The Meeting House was the center of neighborhood life, a powerhouse for worship, sometimes twice or three times a week. Even though the walls about them may have made them somewhat forbidding to non-

Friends, they seemed to Friends of that day to serve the purposes of the Society and its membership well.

Now take your stand with me in the gate leading to the street from Twelfth Street Meeting House. If you stand there for twenty-four hours, before you will probably pass not less than 10,000 people, 1,500 of whom are distraught with some kind of nervous and mental disorder. There will probably pass almost a similar number of men or women or both anxiously carrying a burden of domestic difficulty and threatened divorce. Others pass with a multitude of cares hidden boldly behind apparently unconcerned countenances but yearning for the spiritual help which a messenger of Christ could bring, and they pass by that Meeting House never dreaming that any ministry of help might come from within its ancient walls, having no thought that the Society of Friends is concerned about them. And if they did hope that there was such a concern, there is no way to get access to a concerned, intelligent and able member of our Society who could help them.

Just suppose that in addition to operating a successful institution for the deeply mentally disturbed, and concerning ourselves about confused Friends, a perfectly rightful concern, we thought back to the days when Jesus found His most useful ministry beside the Sea of Galilee, where the people came out in the evening to cool off from the heat; fishermen came home from work, the wives to meet them; a kind of meeting place for the anxious and concerned populace. Could it be that a quiet little retreat in Twelfth Street Meeting House, attractively arranged for interviews and presided over by a younger Friend skilled in the art of

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understanding and help, might be the way in which the ministry of hope and reconciliation so prominent in Jesus' life could be carried out by the Friends in mid-city Philadelphia today?

I have referred to the flight from western Pennsylvania to avoid contamination of our life by people from foreign countries who knew how to mine coal and who settled in the neighborhood for that purpose. But one could pick out a score of such situations within reach of where we are today. Let's take a vivid illustration: It is obvious that locating a huge steel mill near to Morrisville, Pennsylvania, will have direct bearing on our Meeting at nearby Fallsington. I have not consulted with any of the members of this Meeting, and I am only using this because it seems a simple and understandable illustration. Obviously the character of that neighborhood, already altered, will now be completely changed. Shall we see that little Meeting struggle along and finally, because of the changed community, cease to be? And shall we see a great polyglot of American workers and their families move into that community completely unconscious that such a body as the Society of Friends exists with its conception about sacredness of human personality, its belief that wars do not need to come and its protest against participation in them, even though wars to many workers in steel mean full employment? Suppose as a body, the two Yearly Meetings, believing as we do about these men and women being children of God, do not leave the whole job to the Catholic Church, but dream out the way in which we could adapt our ministry to that changing scene as Jesus adapted His to the surging, seething life of common

humanity in His time. This is really moving back of the crisis in which we find ourselves today. It is beginning to glimpse the long-range way in which we might prevent crises, and might prepare people for fuller participation in the deeper meaning of our common Christian faith. We shall never be very effective until we learn better how to minister to the people who heard Jesus gladly—the “common people.”

I am not primarily concerned about the extension of membership of the Society of Friends, although if we are as good as we often seem to think we are, I see no reason for not expanding our membership. But rather I am thinking of that outgoing attitude which compelled Jesus to touch the immediate human need of the people about Him—He only got a scant 70 disciples in His lifetime. Yet may one even dare to say that perchance it was His ministry somewhat indiscriminately thrown out in the meeting places of human populations, that prepared Him to pray the prayer of forgiveness for His enemies as He was dying on the cross? It revealed His complete belief in men and in God. He was called upon finally to do nothing but *stand*, but His “standing” on the cross was made a central, creative act of history because before it He had done all.

### ***National Mood***

I suppose each decade of our national life develops a kind of mood. We Americans have had the mood of general optimism when everyone seemed to be on the escalator going up. Things were running more or less easily and prosperously. It is always difficult to be entirely understanding of the mood of the moment, and it is often

especially helpful to listen to what others say about our mood. I have been impressed while I was associated with United Nations delegates during the last few months, as one has become sufficiently well acquainted so that they will express themselves freely, to find how often they cannot avoid using the word “arrogance” as applied to us American people. Fear and arrogance. Fearful and apprehensive of what may happen, domineering and arrogant toward other people. This is not necessarily said with a feeling that we are wicked, but we do have a tendency toward self-righteousness.

We pray for God’s blessing, but we want Him to help carry out the plans that we lay. We believe in God and that He is on our side. I have wondered how true this is and also what this feeling on the part of people in other parts of the world means for a young Friend facing his obligations to the society of his time. For even those who talk about the importance of technical assistance to other lesser developed parts of the world, may well lapse into a frame of mind that indicates that we, a superior people, are to show our superiority by doing good to those who are inferior. We know what is good for them, and we will propose to do it our way.

In fact, that is one of the major dangers of the whole concept of technical assistance given by technically advanced nations to those who have less technical equipment. Our very supremacy in physical resources, especially when it is dedicated first to security, makes arrogance difficult to avoid. The generation of young Friends coming on the scene today does not look out upon a world where the reservoir of

goodwill toward America of various peoples around the world is full and overflowing. That reservoir is pretty well emptied out. Thinking in terms of government to government, there are few countries in the world today who fully trust the integrity and even the good intentions of the United States. This, it seems to me, lays upon those of us who are citizens of this country to concern ourselves at two points. First of all, we should wield every influence we can to help those who are in positions of influence and power in our government to find those devices of political action which show a high regard for the opinions, the sensitive attitudes, and the desires of people in other parts of the world. There are few among us who will aspire to careers in political activity, yet all of us as citizens have a political responsibility. The exercise of these privileges assumes special significance at a time like this.

If it is too much to expect that states will be dominated by the motive of love for each other, perhaps we may resort to the lines of the poet who said, "Love is not enough; the will to understand is sweeter and holds more closely still." Can we cultivate the listening ear; try to understand, to see how things look through the eye of a Chinese in the midst of a great revolution, or to Indians who have been dominated for 150 years, who are now struggling to turn political independence into spiritual emancipation? This is the day when arrogance is the danger and when a deep spirit of understanding should be the goal most sought. Planning by our educational institutions to prepare men and women to take this mood of the moment, and transform it into a creative process for the future would mean training them in

the skills of mediation, in the art of understanding those most difficult to understand. It would mean adding to the engineer's skill the high art of fellowship with an untrained peasant, as they together learn to increase production and to abolish disease and poverty.

The question as to how far we can go in accommodating ourselves to military demands, it seems to me, should not be so difficult, for we have a high calling as citizens of Heaven to move with conviction and assurance toward a world of sharing and understanding. If we look completely in the opposite direction from preparation for war, we would help to meet the true yearning of men and women for health, food and education, and even more for the emancipation of the spirit. Now as strains become more severe between governments, the importance of voluntary action on the part of citizens, cultivating understanding between peoples of various countries, becomes all the more important and precious. As men depend more on the power of external force, we should learn better the arts of the spirit. Who has not found himself in the presence of someone from another land hoping and yearning to find such fellowship?

Now a second emphasis. The need for spiritual interpreters of the way of life which we profess is greater than ever before, and the demand for training and artistry in these skills is urgent. And this I believe will be true not only of those popularly called "free peoples" but also of others held in the bondage by colonialism or behind the "iron curtain." We may have to face the failure of governments to reach our highest hopes of achievement for peaceful relations with each other. I do not mean that war is inevitable, but it is

obvious that mistrust is growing and must be reckoned with. The scientist, the sociologist, the anthropologist, all even today set forth with eloquence that forcing one's will upon another is a destructive process even though it may not mean a war. The power of convincing, the eloquence of the selfless deed, the concern for meeting human suffering—this is the language of the spirit understood in almost any part of the world. We have seen it work and we can see it work on a larger scale. Especially to mature Friends—are we not called upon to find the way for young men and women to live out this higher mission of the spirit, if we are to be able to say that we have *done all* and are then prepared to *stand*?

### ***“Teach us to Pray”***

But there is one even more delicate task than any I have suggested. How can we accomplish it? Many of our fellow-citizens under the stresses of today have resorted to the call for religion and a confidence in prayer. There is a growing practice of prayer on the part of many laymen, in government, in business, and to some extent in labor groups. Laymen meet to instruct each other in the life of religion. All of this is most promising. And yet on examination, all too often one feels that only the first step has been taken. It is the child's prayer that he may get what he wants, prayer that he may be protected, prayers centering around himself. But the deeper reaches of prayer open the whole of life to the sufferings of men, to friend and foe alike, to a yearning to understand others, to a commitment to the will of God, no matter whether that takes one wide away from the practices of life which he has followed heretofore.

This next step in the life of prayer is yet to be taken by many. In some ways, it seems to me that this is the most delicate mission required for those who know the power of religious faith and who believe in the meaning of prayer. We do not set out to invite God to put through the things we dream up or to ask Him please to be on our side. The real basis of humility is to have a sense that what we are doing is within the will and purpose of our heavenly Father, that all men are His children, that He yearns even more over those who have gone furthest astray and who even claim Him least; and that our job beginning from within and moving upward is to reveal a deep and quiet confidence that we are in God's world, that we can do something about it, and that we, under God, will do something about it.

In the 17th century someone in England wrote a prayer for his people as they awaited the attack of the Spanish Armada. This prayer was republished in the Cedar Rapids *Gazette*, Iowa, soon after we entered the Second World War in 1942. May we pray it now?

### ***Prayer For Our Enemies***

*Merciful and loving Father, we beseech Thee most humbly, even with all our hearts, to pour out upon our Enemies with bountiful hand, whatsoever things Thou knowest will do them good.*

*And chiefly a sound and uncorrupt mind wherethrough they may know Thee and love Thee in true charity and with their whole heart, and love us Thy Children for Thy sake.*

*Let not their first hating of us turn to their harm,  
seeing that we cannot do them good for want of  
ability.*

*Lord, we desire their amendment and our own.  
Separate them not from us by punishing them, but  
join and knit them to us by Thy favorable dealing  
with them.*

*And seeing that we be all ordained to be citizens of  
one Everlasting City, let us begin to enter into that  
way here already by mutual Love which may bring us  
right forth thither.*

## About the Author

Clarence Evan Pickett was born on October 19, 1884 in Cissna Park, Illinois. He came from a family of Quakers (Religious Society of Friends) and grew up in Glen Elder, Kansas. He studied at Penn College in Iowa, the Hartford Theological Seminary and at Harvard.

Clarence first worked as a pastor in the Quaker communities of Toronto and Oskaloosa, and later as a national secretary of the Young Friends of Five Years Meeting (now Friends United Meeting). He was also a professor in biblical literature at Earlham College.

From 1929 to 1950 he was Executive Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), which provided relief in Europe during the World Wars as well as in the United States during the Great Depression and beyond. Clarence began his service with the AFSC while still at Earlham College becoming the Home Service Field Secretary. In 1947, while serving as Executive Secretary the organization accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo with the Friends Service Council (now Quaker Peace and Social Witness) on behalf of Quakers worldwide. The board chair Professor Henry J. Cadbury represented the American Friends Service Committee and Margaret A. Backhouse represented the Friends service Council.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence\\_Pickett](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence_Pickett)

See also *Witness for humanity: a biography of Clarence E. Pickett* by Lawrence McK Miller

## About the Lectures

The William Penn Lectures started as a ministry of the Young Friends' Movement of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. In the beginning of the last century, "Young Friends" was the community of young adults from both the Hicksite and the Orthodox Philadelphia Yearly Meetings, which reunited in 1955. The Young Friends Movement began the lecture series "for the purpose of closer fellowship; for the strengthening by such association and the interchange of experience, of loyalty to the ideals of the Society of Friends; and for the preparation by such common ideals for more effective work through the Society of Friends for the growth of the Kingdom of God on Earth." The name of William Penn was chosen because the Young Friends Movement found Penn to be "a Great Adventurer, who in fellowship with his friends started in his youth on the holy experiment of endeavoring 'To live out the laws of Christ in every thought, and word, and deed; and that these might become the laws and habits of the State.'"

The first run of William Penn Lectures were given between 1916 and 1966, and are warmly remembered by Friends who attended them as occasions to look forward to for fellowship with our community, inspiration, and a challenge to live into our faith. The lectures were published by the Book Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has granted Pendle Hill and Quaker Heron Press permission to reproduce the lectures as free ebooks.

Although it was [announced](#) in 1960 that the series would be discontinued several lectures were published in the early '60s. It appears that the lectures given between 1923 and 1931 were never published. If we come upon manuscripts of these lectures, we hope to publish them in future.

In 2010, the Young Adult Friends of PYM revived the series, officially launching the second run of the William Penn Lectures in 2011. [The series was renamed](#) the *Seeking Faithfulness* series in 2016, as part of the Young Adult Friends of PYM's concern for dismantling racism within the yearly meeting and the wider society. It no longer felt rightly ordered to have a major event named after a slaveholder. The [Seeking Faithfulness](#) series is hosted by the Young Adult Friends for the benefit of the whole yearly meeting community, and invites a Friend to challenge us all to explore new ways to practice our Quaker faith. The Seeking Faithfulness series seeks to nourish our spiritual lives and call us to faithful witness in our communities and throughout the world.