

"On Permaculture, Quakers and Nature"

Permaculture, the Religious Society of Friends or Quakers, and the living world explored in programs like PBS's Nature all point toward a single, quiet revolution: learning to live as if relationship were the basic pattern of reality. Permaculture begins with explicit ethics - Earth Care, People Care, and Fair Share - that ask humans to design farms, cities, and economies as participants in ecosystems rather than their masters, honoring the limits and generosity of soil, water, and sunlight. Quakers' Faith and Practice in Pacific Yearly Meeting describes a community shaped by waiting worship, listening together for the Inward Light, and letting that shared discernment guide testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, and harmony with creation. The lens of Nature, as offered by long-running documentary storytelling, widens that circle of concern, showing intricate webs of cooperation, competition, and adaptation in which humans appear not as exceptions but as one species among many, utterly dependent on the health of larger systems.

When these three streams meet, a distinctive spiritual ecology appears: the ethical clarity of permaculture grounds Quaker concern for "harmony with nature" in practical designs for shelter, food, and livelihood, while Quaker worship and queries deepen permaculture's call to observe and interact into a discipline of reverent attention. The vivid witness of wild places on screen keeps both from collapsing into abstraction, reminding us that "Earth care" and "testimonies" are finally about specific rivers, species, and neighborhoods struggling to endure. Together they suggest that true sustainability is not only technical but spiritual: communities of people learning, again and again, to listen - both inwardly and outwardly - until their patterns of work, worship, and design reflect the quietly resilient patterns of the Earth that sustains them.

- william george paul

Resources:

Nature

<https://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/>

Permaculture

<https://permacultureprinciples.com/>

Quakers

<https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/faith-practice/>