

Levi Pennington

People

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4-19-1965

## Pennington to Harlow Ankeny, April 19, 1965

Levi T. Pennington

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### Recommended Citation

Pennington, Levi T., "Pennington to Harlow Ankeny, April 19, 1965" (1965). *Levi Pennington*. 306.  
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April 19, 1965.

Harlow Ankeny, Editor,  
Fruit of the Vine,  
600 East Third Street,  
Newberg, Oregon.

Dear Friend:--

An unscheduled opportunity came to me over the week end to try to do the thing you asked me to do, and I tried to do it. The result is not very satisfactory to me, but it is the best I could do in the time that I had.

I Wrote it out by hand, and got so extravagant with words that I had to cut out a good many hundred words before I could get any of it down to the limits you suggested. Some of it is far over those limits still, but I notice that you have sometimes used articles longer than 250 words -- one that I saw has more than twice that many words.

If this material is not satisfactory, you're the editor. If you do not use it, it will not be my first editorial rejection.

Sincerely your friend,

Levi T. Pennington.



THURSDAY  
JULY 1

LIVING TOGETHER  
FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

Bible Reading: Matthew 7:1-12.

If we lived as Robinson <sup>Crusoe</sup> did before he had Friday with him, there would be serious problems, but they would not be problems that involved other folks and our relations with them. As it is, one important part of life involves our relationship with God, and the other part involves our relationship with our fellow men.

The Ten Commandments illustrate this. The first four of them deal with our relationship with God; the other six deal with our relationship with other men, women and children. Jesus summed them all up in two great commandments, love to God and love to man. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.....Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This second commandment He stated in another way, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." This Golden Rule is a good foundation principle for all our relationships with others.

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Lord, help me to live as Jesus would live if He were living where I live and under my circumstances.

FRIDAY  
JULY 2

LIVING TOGETHER  
IN THE FAMILY

Bible Reading, Colossians 3:17-25

The family is the most basic of all social institutions. It should be a place of unity and helpfulness, of mutual love and of willingness to sacrifice, one for all and all for one.

Husband and wife, father and mother should so maintain their love for each other and for their children that there would never be the sense of insecurity under which so many children spend their lives.

Children should obey their parents, and remember their brothers and sisters in such ways as will be most helpful one to the other.

The maintenance of the family altar, where the family once a day worship the Lord together is as important as it ever was. It preserves family unity as nothing else can. "Those who pray together stay together" has in it more truth than poetry.

In the right kind of a home, where love to God and love to one another is maintained, the growing child has the maximum chance to become a man or woman of real power for good in the world.

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Lord, help me to do my part to make and keep my home what I should want it to be if Jesus were a member of the household.

SATURDAY  
JULY 3

LIVING TOGETHER  
IN THE SCHOOL

Bible Reading: Luke 2:40-52

We never cease to learn if we are really alive; and much of our education comes before we enter school. But life in school puts into association with others outside the home, and gives many new privileges and responsibilities.

Here a first requirement, for ourselves and for others, is honesty. No pilfering, no cheating on examinations, no false gossip -- we need the kind of honesty we'd want to observe if Jesus were a fellow student and an all-seeing observer.

Industry should characterize our life in school; no



inferior work by one capable of work that is superior; no "loafing in Latin" because one expects to be a farmer and does not expect "to plow corn in Latin".

And one should be willing to help a fellow student in every possible way, and especially in being the kind of student that every student ought to be, mentally and morally and spiritually.

And those who are out of the ordinary school and in the University of Hard Knocks should maintain open minds and never cease to learn, and should discharge their full duty in making and keeping our schools what they ought to be.

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 Lord, help me, whether in the ordinary school of education or in the School of Experience, to preserve right relations with my fellow students, eight years old and less or eighty years old and more, as if Jesus were one of them.

SUNDAY  
 JULY 4

LIVING TOGETHER  
 IN THE CHURCH

Bible Reading, Ephesians 4:32; 5:21;  
 Galatians 6:1-10

The privilege of Christian fellowship in the church is far too lightly esteemed by many of its members. It is the duty of every church member to help the world outside; but it is no less his duty to help his fellow members. We are enjoined to "Do good unto all men, especially those who are of the household of faith."

Just a few suggestions on living happily and helpfully in the church.

Help one another in a material way. Sometimes a bit of extra food as a surprise gift is helpful beyond all its financial cost. Help in housework, help with outdoor work -- I know a man who is everybody's friend and everybody's helper.

Take your share of the work of the church, choir leader or member, treasurer, Sunday School superintendent or teacher, janitor or junior superintendent, paid or unpaid, thanked or unthanked, do your share. There are shirkers and jerkers and workers in every church -- be a worker.

Have due consideration for others. Look charitably on the faults of others -- are you faultless? Give fair consideration to the views of others -- are you omniscient? Never try to override a minority by the power of a majority. The Quaker ideal of acting only when there is "unity" has much merit.

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 Lord, help me to work in the church in such a way as will contribute most to the good of my fellow members and to the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

MONDAY  
 JULY 5

LIVING TOGETHER  
 IN THE COMMUNITY

Bible Reading, Matthew 5:13-16.

A man and his wife were about to move from a community in which an elderly Quaker lived. The man was disagreeable, selfish; the woman was a kindly, loving and lovable soul. The man said to the ancient Friend, "I'm glad to be moving out of this neighborhood. The people here are selfish, disagreeable, unkind, and I'm glad to



get away from such neighbors." "It won't do thee any good" replied the old Quaker. "Thee'll find just such neighbors wherever thee goes." The wife met him later and said, "I regret to leave this community. The neighbors have always been so kind and thoughtful that I love them and wish I did not have to lose them." "Thee does not need to worry" said the old Friend. "Thee'll find just such neighbors wherever thee goes."

Of Jesus it was said "He went about doing good." Paul said of Him, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He used to say 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Lord, help me to live in my community in such a way that I make it in every way better, and so that men and women and children may be won to Christ because they see what He has done for me.

**TUESDAY**

**JULY 6**

**LIVING TOGETHER**

**IN STATE AND NATION**

Bible Reading, Proverbs 14:34;

Acts 5, 17-29

When as a boy I read in the King James Version of the bible "Our conversation is in heaven", I did not understand it. I was sure that some of my conversation would not be exactly appropriate for heaven. When a new translation made it "Our citizenship is in heaven" it gave it more meaning, for I had read of those "whose names are written in heaven", and I could understand how one could have his citizenship in heaven as well as here on earth, just as then I was a citizen of the United States as well as a citizen of Michigan.

But there were those who took this to mean that since their citizenship was in heaven they had nothing to do with citizenship on earth, and therefore, so far as they were concerned, nothing bad in government would have their opposition and nothing good in government would have their support.

But another translator saw a different meaning from that in Paul's statement. Paul was a Roman citizen, and he was writing to the Christians in Philippi, and Philippi was a Roman colony. This translator put the Greek expression into English, "We are a colony of heaven." The citizens of Philippi, proud of their Roman citizenship, tried to make Philippi as much like Rome as possible. And that's our duty as citizens of Heaven as well as citizens of earthly government, to make our city, our state, our nation as much like heaven as possible.

Volumes could be written on the need for Christian citizenship, and much of it would have to do with the failure of Christians to do their duty at the polls. Let a single instance suffice. When prohibition was written into the constitution of the United States, we sang exultantly, "It is in the constitution and it's there to stay", and then we went to sleep. And when the wet movement brought to a vote the issue of the repeal of that prohibition provision of the constitution, it was repealed by the vote of less than a third of the registered voters of America. The "wets" voted, too many of the "drys" were good men and women but not good citizens, and so we have thousands of "taverns" instead of "saloons", with bar maids instead of male bar tenders.

Every Christian citizen should discharge fully his or her duty at the polls.



Lord, help me to do my full duty as a citizen of heaven and a citizen on earth, and to carry out fully both of the great commandments of love to God and love to man.

WEDNESDAY  
JULY 7

LIVING TOGETHER  
IN THE WORLD

Bible reading, Matthew 6:10; Revelation 11:15.

Every relationship that an individual assumes brings its privileges and responsibilities, and this is true of nations. We live in one of the most favored nations on earth. "Unto whom much is given, of him shall much be required" applies to nations as much as to individuals.

What are the duties of America that the Christian citizen should help to carry out?

The Maintenance of Peace. More than any other nation we have the opportunity to lead the world toward that day when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." And no other denomination has greater responsibility than Friends to promote "the things that make for peace." And that means peace between man and God, between man and man, between class and class, between race and race, between nation and nation. Devotion to the cause of peace may mean refusal to do some of the things which may be asked of us but which would require us to violate the will of God as we understand it, and we can say, as did leaders of the Christian Church in biblical days, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Whatever it costs, we should be willing to pay the price for our devotion to world peace.

The Feeding of the World. It cannot be pleasing to God that half the world goes to bed undernourished every night while America pays much more than a million dollars a day for the mere storage of surplus food.

The Education of the World. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" was the promise a long time ago. It is the duty of America to help in the fulfilment of that promise. Half the world is in the slavery of superstition, disease, needless pain and other forms of slavery because of lack of knowledge of the world that God has created and of the laws, physical, mental, moral, social, economic and other, that He has made to control it. It is America's duty to help in the education of the world.

The Evangelization of the World. Great as are the needs of mankind, physical, mental, social, economic and what not, the supreme need is spiritual. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, <sup>the only true God,</sup> and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." The command to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" is the Great Commission to the church today as truly as it was when Christ gave it to His immediate followers.

We may well heed the admonition of the old hymn:

Give of thy sons to bear the message glorious;

Give of thy wealth to speed them on their way;

Pour out thy soul for them in prayers victorious

And all thou spendest Jesus will repay.

Lord, help us to do our full share in carrying out the Great Commission, and in helping to answer our prayer,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done

On earth

As it is in heaven."