

members of their churches in attendance. The following was the closing scene :

*Pres.* Brethren, as we have met on the Lord's day and the first day of the year, to take a very important step, I think it but reasonable, that we give our fellow-citizens a brief outline of the reasons that have led us to this step.

1. I satisfied myself that the authority of God required us to unite. The Lord prayed that we should be one. The holy apostle commanded us to be perfectly joined together and that there should be no divisions among us. In looking over ancient history, I found that there was but one body—one church, or as we have been wont to say—but one denomination—in the apostolic age, and that when any persons took steps likely to result in a separation, they were condemned as carnal, heretics, schismatics, etc., or as Jude expresses it, “sensual, having not the Spirit.” From considerations like these, I have become satisfied, that making and keeping up these divisions, is what the Bible calls *heresy*, and that we are living in the clearest and most manifest disobedience, and cannot expect the blessings of heaven.

2. I inquired for the object of *union* and found a most forcible answer in the Lord's own words. He prayed that believers might be one, that the world might believe. I saw clearly from this, that in the estimation of the Lord, division was directly in the way of the conversion of the world, and that the Saviour did not contemplate the conversion of the world till believers were united. Knowing this, I could not, with any confidence, pray for the conversion of the world, without making an effort to remove out of the way an insuperable barrier.

3. I became satisfied, that all who are truly Christians, *can* unite, for the Lord would not require an impossibility, and pray for it to be done, that the world might be converted. If all Christians cannot be one, then, when the Lord prayed that they might be one, he not only prayed, knowing that his prayer could not be answered, but made the conversion of the world depend on the answer of a prayer that he knew never could be answered. This, I am well assured, is not the case.—When the Lord prayed that believers might be one, he not only prayed for what *can*, but what *will* come to pass. Then, we may expect the world to be converted.

4. I am well satisfied that there is no Scriptural basis for union but the Bible. It was the only law, the only creed, the only basis of