

there be from day to day the sincere communion of devout souls with our God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; here let there be from hour to hour, to all of us, the very house of God, the very gate of Heaven! Oh, that the Spirit of God come down upon us now in the fulness of the grace in Jesus Christ; that He unite our hearts in the love of God and love one for another; in the faith and truth of God, and in fidelity to the Church of God and the Cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Oh, that He descend and crown us now with fire! We are not here of our own mission or direction; we are not here to promote mere worldly or local interests, or to secure personal ends or private aims; we are not here to gratify the spirit of controversy, the pride of opinion, or love of debate; we are not here to obtain the prevalence of, it may be, cherished schemes, wishes and views. But we are here, appointed of the Church and authorized of Heaven, obligated by our relations as Christian men, and vows as Christian ministers, who shall all appear at the judgment seat of Christ, submitting ourselves one to another in the fear of God, in honor preferring one another, to watch over and guard the interests of the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood; to seek its edification in pure doctrine and holy discipleship, and its extension in the spirit and power of holiness among all peoples and in all lands, that the salvation of our God be mighty, and clearly demonstrated in ourselves and our people, and go speedily and triumphantly to the ends of the earth. We are here to establish, maintain, improve and foster all institutions by which our Church shall be less hindered and more successful in her work. We are here to direct as to the laws, offices and authorities of the Church, for all pure and purifying discipline, and all righteous, vigorous and effective administration. We are here to maintain or modify customs and usages, not as may pander to the world or its spirit, but as may honor God and help in the salvation of men. We are here to uphold and defend scriptural, cherished, and time-tested, time-honored principles of polity and government, and yet, in harmony with those principles, to adapt all economies and polities to the well ordering of the affairs of the Church, the evident and proper demands of the time, and the right and efficient use of money, means and agencies in the work of God. We are here to appoint men to places of honor, trust and power among their brethren. We are here to exercise, without fear, favor or affection, the highest privilege of intelligent, conscientious men, and to cast the vote which, in the eyes of Jesus Christ, our enthroned Prince and Mediator, is unquestionably the most precious ballot deposited amid the suffrages of free, religious and responsible men, citizens of the Kingdom of God. Even if this brief enumeration include all, how great, how arduous, how momentous are the duties of this Conference! Surely we have not come to gratify curiosity, to have a ride to Toronto, to stay for an hour or run away in a day.