

CALL TO PRAYER

ON BEHALF OF THE

General Conference on Foreign Missions

TO BE HELD IN LONDON

From the 9th to the 19th of June, 1888.

THE COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE,

To the Pastors and Teachers of the Church of God in the British Isles, and on the Continents of Europe and America.

DEAR BRETHREN,

We would with all respect and affection approach you, with the same request for prayer to Almighty God our Heavenly Father, which we have addressed to all the European and American Missionaries and their converts labouring in all parts of the habitable world.* We desire to realize the true oneness of the Church of God in all her branches, and scattered fields of labour—a unity felt and enjoyed at the footstool of the one "God and Father of all."

In looking to the foreign fields of the Church's labours, we have great cause for rejoicing in the blessings which have accompanied the preaching of the gospel by the Missionaries of the Church of Christ during the last hundred years of modern Missionary effort, whereby about three millions from among the heathen are at this hour found gathered into the fellowship of the Church on earth, and many more into the Church in heaven; while at the same time large tribes of our fellow-men, who were sunk in the grossest barbarism and superstition, have been socially elevated, and have derived manifold secondary benefits from the preaching of the glorious Gospel of the grace of God.

But while we are unceasingly grateful to God for the great things accomplished in the past, we lament over the feebleness of the efforts put forth by the Churches of Christ, and we mourn over *the great and increasing mass of heathenism* which still confronts the Church in this nineteenth century of the Christian era. It is one great object of the Conference to be assembled in June, to look this appalling fact fully in the face, and by applying the lessons taught by the past to the conditions of the present, to exert more adequate efforts for the evangelization of the world than have been put forth heretofore. For this end we would earnestly seek the awakening of a mission spirit for the conversion of the heathen, assured that it will return in as rich blessing on the Church's work at home as was seen in the revival of the spiritual life of the Churches of this country a hundred years ago.

* Eight thousand copies of a circular like this were sent out in February, which was forwarded by the Missionary Societies of Europe and America to all their Agents to be communicated to the three millions of converts from among the heathen, in their many languages.

Our great object in now addressing you is to ask you to call upon your people to unite with you in prayer and supplication for a Pentecostal blessing on the Conference, from Sunday, the 3rd of June, to Tuesday, the 19th of the same; being the week before, and the ten days during which the Conference will be in session.

Pray that, under God, the Conference may be the means of introducing a new era in Missionary enterprise. That it may hasten the day when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord."

We do not prescribe hours, or lay down a list of subjects for prayer. The one special gift which includes all "good things," is the gift of the Holy Spirit, whose presence we seek in all the plenitude of His grace and power. But may we ask that the Sundays falling on the 10th and 17th of June, and the Prayer Meetings held in the second and third weeks of that month, may be made occasions for special public prayer on behalf of the Conference, and to urge on families and individual Christians the duty of making these weeks a season of social and private prayer for those important meetings, when many hundreds of the representatives of almost every Protestant Mission will be assembled from all lands, "with one accord in one place"—a pledge, we trust, of a Pentecostal blessing.

Let us encourage one another in the thought that unnumbered brethren throughout the whole world are uniting in the same prayer. We have good reason to hope that this will be the most universal cry that has ever gone up from this sinful world, for one definite object, into the ear of "the Lord of Sabaoth." Most of all would we strengthen our mutual faith and trust in the oath and promise of God made in the dark hour of Israel's apostacy, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Numbers xiv. 21); and by looking to the sure word of prophecy, "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk ii. 14). But let us remember that along with the assured promises and prophecies of the Word of God (Ezekiel xxxvi. 33-36) there is coupled the prescribed duty of earnest, humble, importunate, united and believing prayer. "Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them" (Ezekiel xxxvi. 37). And let us go to our Father in heaven with the argument put into our mouth by His own Son, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him."

We are, dear Brethren,

Yours in the Lord,

(Signed) ABERDEEN, *President.*

H. M. MATHESON,

EDWARD B. UNDERHILL,

S. G. GREEN,

HENRY MORRIS,

J. SHARP,

JAMES JOHNSTON, *Secretary.*

} *Chairmen.*

} *Hon. Secs.*