

CLOSING PRAYER OF THE SEVENTH MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

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Almighty, eternal, and everlasting God; God of our fathers, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and of all who put their trust in Thee; God of all mercy and compassion—how can we praise Thee as we ought? How can we love Thee as we ought? How can we requite to Thee for all the wonders Thou hast wrought in us? Yet our hearts are full of desire to praise Thee and to adore Thee, and to say: Thou art our God, Thou art our Father. Thou hast been with us.

We rejoice to know that in the darkness of this world the light doth shine in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ, for in Him we have seen Thee. Thou hast made Him the eternal Word to be flesh and dwell among us, to be one of us, to bear our sins away on the cross, to rise again in newness of life and in the power of the resurrection, to be the almighty Lord of heaven and earth. Now we know through Him, and through Thy Word, what Thou art seeking to accomplish in this world. Thou hast called us to be Thy disciples indeed, to come after Thee, to take up our cross daily and follow Thee, to do Thy bidding. Thou hast willed to let Thy great work of redemption be accomplished even through us to whom Thou hast bestowed the great treasure of the Gospel, the great power of Thy Holy Spirit, and the great love of Christ that constrains us.

We are humbled in Thy presence. We acknowledge our weakness and our inadequacy, yes to our shame, our failures and shortcomings before Thee. Yet our hearts rise up to rejoice at all the possibilities that lie before us in this world because Thou art the Lord—Lord of the universe, Lord of the church, Lord of our lives, Lord of all. O, dear Lord, we not only want to discover ever more the meaning of Thy lordship, but we want to follow that meaning. We do not want to serve two masters, even though at times we find within our hearts the temptation to do so, and sometimes we try to do so. O forgive us and help us truly to have but one Lord, an undivided heart, a pure heart that seeks above all to love and serve Thee, and through Thee our fellow men.

We have again in this time of conference caught a fresh vision, given to us by Thee through our brethren in so many ways. For this we thank Thee, and praise Thee with rejoicing, and we renew our vows of commitment to Thee. Yes, great Jehovah, guide us, lead us, until some day we all shall hear the welcome words: Come home,

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thou beloved of the Lord, thou servant of mine, and dwell in the house of the Lord forever. We would not finish our thanksgiving without thanking Thee for all the brethren and how much they mean to us, how much they have meant to us, every one of them, as we beheld them through the eyes of those who also have Thee as Lord. We are united because we seek to live under Thy lordship. We thank Thee for the brethren. Increase our love for the brethren and for the brotherhood. And, as the coming years give us opportunity, help us to help one another in all the good ministries of the Gospel, of compassion and aid—from the oldest of our churches in Europe, now over 400 years old, to the newest of our churches in the far-flung corners of the earth, even in Japan.

And now we commit this conference to Thee, with all that has been said and done. Take away that which is contrary to Thy holy will. Keep alive and warm in our hearts all those good things that are to build us up in the most holy faith, and grant we shall so live that men may see it is the Lord whom we love and whom we serve. Now as we go one from the other, grant us journeying mercies and watch over us, each one, until we come home again in safety and security. And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you each one, now and forevermore. Amen.



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