

assembled in Conference at Baltimore, in the seventh month, 1849, agreeably to a proposition from the Yearly Meeting of New York, united with by the other Yearly Meetings assembled to take into consideration the present tried state of our Society, and to labor for its restoration to that unity and fellowship that formerly characterized it.

On assembling for this important and solemn purpose, we were brought very humbly to crave the assistance of Him who alone can rightly direct us in the discharge of the service confided to us, and present our petitions that we may be favored to find access to the hearts of those for whom we are brought into deep and feeling exercise.

The promotion of the cause of our Holy Redeemer should at all times be the paramount consideration with all his possessed fellows, and the advancement of His Kingdom upon the earth should be our prayerful, individual and collective concern. We have abundant evidence - we cannot doubt - that it was in the ordering of the Holy Head of the Church, that our forefathers, our religious professors, were separated from the world, and from the various sects of professing Christians, and left to entertain those views of the purity and spirituality of the gospel dispensation by which they were distinguished. The persecution with which our religious Society has been so eminently blessed - the spread in the world at large, in a greater or less degree, of the benign principles which we profess, notwithstanding individual unfaithfulness in the full support of them, are compelling evidence that the Lord has been pleased to be gracious to us and call for earnest and abiding dedication to Him, and for watchful rest unto prayer that the enemy of the Church, and of man, be not suffered to come in and destroy our goodly heritage. It is only as we keep in a humble and dependant state, looking unto the true Shepherd whose voice may be heard and who will protect his flock, that we can know an abiding in the fold of safety.

In a solemn review of the present situation of our beloved Society, it is sorrowfully evident, that the peace, the harmony, the unity, and the fellowship which are indispensable to our prosperity and usefulness as a branch of the militant Church, have been lessened and seriously interrupted, but we humbly trust, that with the Divine blessing, it will once more be that harmony and love which formerly characterized Friends, for us to return to the same true foundation and to

that system of Church government, which in Past Wisdom, had been raised thereon, and which had stood against many floods and tempests through a long series of years.

This foundation is none other than Christ Jesus, the Rock of Ages. A pure belief in Him as our Saviour and Redeemer, as our only hope of glory and eternal blessedness, has ever been confessed by us; and full have been our acknowledgments to His eternal Divinity - to all that He has done for us without us - in that prepared body when He came to do His Father's will - to the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice on the cross - to His ascension - His mediation and intercession for the children of men. Nor less have we felt constrained to bear our testimony to a living practical faith in the immediate teachings and guidance of the Holy Spirit; and to the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, gratefully accepting them as having been written by holy men moved as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. These fundamental truths, and in connection therewith our living in regard to the Divine call to, the true preparation for, and the proper exercise of, a living gospel ministry - the spiritual nature of the worship of God, and all these important testimonies connected with our Christian profession, have been abundantly testified to by our Society in many solemn declarations of faith that have been from time to time set forth to the world - and while we do not mean to be called upon to enlarge upon these particular statements, or to repeat these declarations of our Christian faith and doctrine, having the convincing belief that they are accepted and acknowledged by Friends throughout our Religious Society, yet we earnestly desire that we may in all wide lapse into any defect or deviation.

Resting in the unchangeable truths of the Gospel, our worthy forefathers, under the enlightening influence of Divine Grace, early saw the necessity of that organization of meetings, and the establishment of that Christian discipline, which are essential to the preservation and prosperity, and very full, solemn and fruitful in the language of that devoted servant of Christ, George Fox, when he refers to the setting up of meetings for discipline and the authority in which they should be held. "They were set up by the Spirit and power of the Lord God," "where the power of the Lord God is the authority of your meeting and meeting meetings." And, however high and holy may