

CHURCH ASSOCIATION FORM OF PRAYER

Church Association Tract 130

USED AT THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE CHURCH ASSOCIATION, HELD IN
WILLIS' ROOMS, ON 26 NOVEMBER, 1867.

And considered by the Council suitable for Private Prayer, Family Worship, and any Meetings for those who are specially interested in the Society's work.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Heavenly Father, we desire to come into Thy presence as contrite sinners pleading the all-sufficient sacrifice, and all prevailing merits, of our Divine Redeemer. We would humble ourselves before Thee for our manifold transgressions and short-comings. We justly merit Thy correcting hand. Our privileges are great and our responsibility is great. We have not rendered again according to the kindness bestowed upon us. We have been permitted through Thy gracious Providence, now for three centuries, to enjoy as a Church the inestimable privilege of religious liberty and to possess in our own tongue Thine inspired Word. Thou hast been pleased oftentimes to grant an abundant blessing to the labours of Thy faithful ministers among us at home and abroad, and hast made our Protestant nation a centre of light to the world. And now, Lord, what shall we say? We are ashamed to lift up our faces before Thee. Fatal errors are propagated in our midst which threaten the existence of our Reformed Church. False brethren have crept in among us, who are setting at defiance her recognised doctrines and would bring us again under the yoke of spiritual bondage. Our eyes are turned unto Thee. We desire to commit our cause into Thy hand. Thy dealings in former ages encourage us to hope. O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that Thou didst in their days and in the old time before them. And is Thine arm shortened that it cannot save? Is Thine ear heavy that it cannot hear? Wilt Thou refrain Thyself for these things, O Lord? O that Thou wouldst rend the heavens, that Thou wouldst come down, and make bare Thine arm in behalf of Thy faithful servants. Stir up among us, we pray Thee, the Spirit of Grace and of supplication. Bless the means which are now adopted for the exposure of error. Grant Thy blessings to the counsels of the Church Association, that it may maintain the Truth among us.

May we have a single eye to Thy glory. May no party feelings mar our work. But may we be actuated by a simple desire to honour Christ, and to maintain those blessed truths for which our martyred Reformers yielded up their lives. To this end, graciously grant unanimity in our counsels. May our common dangers bind us together as one man in defence of the Gospel. The enemy, Lord, is bold and daring, but Thy power is all-sufficient to restrain. To Thee we commit our cause. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto Thy servants that with all boldness they may speak Thy word. Grant renewed energy to our faithful pastors. Deepen the impression among us of the vast interests at stake, of the perils which would follow the withdrawal of Thy Spirit. Let us prize more and more the simplicity of the Gospel, and be sensible of the danger of external pomp and ceremony in our worship, where spiritual life is wanting. May our faith ever rest on the one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice offered upon Calvary, never to be repeated. Quicken in our souls the life and power of godliness. May there be more zeal, more love, more self-denial, more separation from the world. Give us boldness in the time of peril. Let there be no shrinking from duty, no fear of man, no attempt to compromise, where Thy truth is at stake.

Bless, we humbly pray Thee, our families. Look upon our sons and daughters, exposed as they are to so many temptations, which might cause them to swerve from the simplicity of Protestant truth. Bless our Universities and Schools, and preserve them from the invasion of false doctrine. Bless our beloved Queen. Give wisdom to those who are in authority. Guide the counsels of our leaders, both in Church and State, and raise up faithful men to defend Thy truth. Qualify them for their work,

by Thy gifts and graces, and sustain them by Thine Almighty hand. Finally, we pray that this season of anxiety and trial may result in a still fuller extension of the knowledge of Thy Word, that these perils may tend rather to the furtherance of the Gospel. To this end we would earnestly entreat of Thee a large outpouring of Thy Holy Spirit. May our hearts be fixed more singly on the great concerns of eternity, and may a revival of spiritual religion be vouchsafed among us. Awake, O north wind, and come thou south: blow upon our garden that the spices thereof may flow out. All this we ask in the name and through the mediation of our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.