

of loveliness and holiness, the beauty and the purity of spiritual life, and it will draw. As in the old time, the Lord will add daily to the church such as are saved."

Let us not be afraid, then, to go to these timid Josephs and Nicodemuses and holding out the hand of christian fellowship to them, say, "Come in, ye blessed of the Lord; wherefore stand ye without?" Profession of faith in Jesus is a duty, to which we may properly urge a true disciple as well as any other duty; and we sin against the brethren, and sin against Christ, if we suffer them to neglect it without kindly entreaty and admonition.

BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.

DEAR SIR,— In your answer to my communication of Feb. 14, you say—"The reply given by our correspondent to the third of the questions which we proposed to him for discussion, and which he prefers to take up first, is, we submit, "quite beside the mark." He has produced no "positive injunction" for the practice of close communion, and for the best of all reasons, viz. : that the New Testament does not contain one. He *infers* it by putting two passages together, a mode of argument which Baptists won't listen to when we employ it in defence of infant baptism," &c.

In discussion, a great deal depends on the exact definition of terms. Allow me to explain, for the benefit of the uninitiated, what close communion really is.

Close communion is the practice of requiring *believers'* baptism always to precede church fellowship. You say that I have produced no "positive injunction" for the practice of close communion, but *infer* it by putting two passages together, &c." Baptists are not in the practice of founding positive institutions on inferences. We require *believers'* baptism to precede church fellowship, because we find in Acts ii. that the Apostles did so. We consider that approved Apostolic example is equal to "positive injunction." Don't you?

Further, you say, "But admitting, for the sake of argument, the validity of our correspondent's inference, what does he prove? Why, just what we all admit,—that, as a rule, "baptism"—whatever that means—ought to precede fellowship at the Lord's table; ought *always* to do so, we will say, unless it can be shown that the same Divine authority which laid down the rule, has also made provision for exceptional cases. Here we are at one, &c."

Nay, good brother, here we are *not* at one. Our practices in this matter are "wide as the poles asunder." We require *believers'* baptism to precede church fellowship because the Apostles did so. You put the baptism (I will be polite enough to forget to call it *sprinkling*) of unconscious infants in the place of *believers'* baptism, and then tell us coolly that "here we are at one." Nay, verily, it is here where we differ.

The practice of baptizing *believers* before they are admitted to church fellowship is founded on the example of the Apostles in Acts ii. Even