

a return implies a departure, and what is it from which "all Christian communions" have departed? And whither must they all return in order to organic unity? "To the principles of unity exemplified by the undivided Catholic Church," say some. Agreed, if by this is meant the Church (or rather the Churches) established by our Lord and His inspired Apostles. These are Baptist sentiments everywhere. Baptists believe that Christ alone can make laws for His Churches, and furthermore that all of these laws are revealed in the New Testament, explicitly or implicitly. They care very little for Church Standards, Creeds, or Confessions of Faith, however venerable, but they care very much for the New Testament and they mean to be guided solely by this in all things. "Why then," it is asked, "do you maintain the odious practice of close communion? Where is the New Testament warrant for that?" Our answer is that in the present condition of the Christian world we feel obliged to take the position we do in this matter by the principle involved in the Great Commission of our Lord, (Matt. 28:19) according to which the Divine order of things in the establishment and extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom on earth is, (1) Discipleship, (2) Baptism, (3) Church life,—an order which is theoretically admitted by all evangelical churches. But how can this Divine order be maintained if the items of it are reversed, or if any one of them is altogether omitted? How can our Lord's Kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven if Baptism precedes discipleship, or if the Lord's Supper, which is the peculiar privilege of Church fellowship is received by the unbaptized even though they are disciples? There can be but one answer to these questions by evangelical believers, and there is but one. No evangelical church in America, so far as I know, receives those whom it considers unbaptized as regular communicants at the Lord's Table. All such churches admit that Baptism is the *formal* as discipleship is the *moral* prerequisite to the Lord's Supper. The difference between the Baptists and other evangelical churches is not as to the terms of admission to the Lord's Supper, but as to what constitutes Christian Baptism. And yet if the New Testament alone is followed, how can there be any difference of faith and practice on this point? Where is the New Testament warrant for infant baptism? or baptismal regeneration? or for anything as baptism except the immersion of a professed believer? Representative men of all denominations agree on this last point. Lexicographers, Exegetes, Historians, Theologians, Ministers of the first rank in all communions