

back of the pulpit, boldly advanced and gave me his hand. It was unexpected by me and all present, and produced a shock of electricity. The whole congregation felt it, but chiefly that aged woman of whom we have spoken. This was her son, her favorite son—her Benjamin. No sooner had he stepped forward than all her objections were silenced. Her heart was smitten with remorse for the opposition she had shown to her daughter, and withdrawing a little aside she spoke a few words to an old gentleman who proved to be her husband; they both, with tears and sobs, pressed through the congregation and as they came she beckoned her daughter to come along with her, which immediately she did, and then sons-in-law and their wives, making a large family circle, stood side by side to confess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was truly a season of festivity and gladness. We heard their confession, and that afternoon, before sunset, we went to the beautiful stream and introduced them into the Kingdom by the instituted ordinance of Christian baptism.

We left soon after, and know not how they lived, but hope and trust, that by continued obedience to the doctrine which is according to godliness, they may enter into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Think not, reader, that we were in too great haste in our treatment of these cases. Suffice it to say, that the King's business requires dispatch; and that we are justified, by all we read in the New Testament in all cases of conversion. This should silence the cavils of all who object to it.

The converts made by John the Baptist, on confession of their sins, were immediately baptized, with the exception of the Pharises and Sadducees who demanded baptism from their fleshly relationship to Abraham and not because of their reformation and need of forgiveness. All Jerusalem and Judea, and the region along the Jordan, flocked to his baptism and were permitted the privilege of submission to this ordinance. Who will say that John was in to a great haste?

The same is true with the converts made by the Messiah. Jesus said, "follow me"—and they followed him. To Zaccheus he said, "make haste and come down, for this day salvation is come to thy house," and he forthwith obeyed. "Let the dead bury their dead," said he to another, who framed an excuse, or rather had one on hand, which most persons would deem a good one; but no! it was more important to follow Jesus, than to discharge the offices due to the dead—even though it may be a dead father!

All the Acts of the Apostles belong to the same category—the Tabor, Lydia and her household, Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius and family, the Ethiopian, the three thousand on the Pentecost, and, indeed, all others.

The commands and invitations of the Gospel are "To-day," and we should make haste to obey them. The need of the sinner, his perishing condition, and the claims of the Saviour upon rebellious world, demanded prompt measures

and unreserved submission. "Now is the accepted time. This is the day of salvation."

Both reason and revelation require promptitude in the matter of reform and obedience. There should be no delay and temporizing. No one ever broke from any sinful habit by degrees—or the cases are extremely rare. The only safe and certain way is to break square off, and "touch not, taste not, handle not," for the future. This is the law of success and the rule of action in all such cases, and the Gospel deals with men on this principle. It makes no provision for the flesh. It gives no place to the Devil. It makes no compromises with the world. If we gather not with Christ, we strew abroad; if not for him, we are against him. Neutrality is worse than being hot or cold in the estimation of our King!

Our experience proves that this is the most sure and successful method also of making disciples; and when made, that they are the most faithful and preserving, if put under proper discipline, and subjected to the instruction and government of a competent Pastorate. There are fewer apostacies, less scandal brought upon the cause of Christ, and fewer cases of discipline under this regimen than under any that I have heard of or known.

We have seen, that in all the cases reported in the Acts of the Apostles, the demand for prompt and ready obedience was both urged and accepted. So soon as sinners heard and believed, they were commanded, without delay, to repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. All who gladly received the word, forthwith obeyed. There are no reasons why any change should take place now in administering the ordinance of baptism to the penitent believer.

If some come into the Church, who ought not to be in it, under this apostolic method of preaching the Gospel; how many have been kept out of the Church, under the prudential system, which human wisdom has adopted, who ought to be in it! The evils which follow the neglect of the apostolic precedent, are far greater than any that might arise from a too strict adherence to it. What if some *chaff* is found with the wheat at harvest, shall the farmer carefully pass through his fields and separate diligently the precious from the vile before he puts in the sickle? Such a precaution would ruin his harvests, and expose them to the winds and storms of winter. In the granary the good and the bad will both be found; but the good always surpasses in amount the bad. The time of separation is after the grain has been gathered—incipiently and imperfectly here, but more thoroughly in the last day.

In the churches planted by the apostles, there were many found who were brought in unto them by the great sweep net of the Gospel, who had been better left in the sea.

There were many brought into the churches planted by the apostles, who ought not to have been in them; but the "drag-net" of the Gospel enclosed them, and by a sort of physical necessity they were compelled to enter, and we must expect the same.