

the godly deportment, and Christian activity of those who have been gathered in, is true prosperity.

Probably the most perilous period of the Christian life is during the first few months succeeding conversion. It is then that fierce assaults are made by the enemy of souls to crush the buds of piety, so that there shall be no fruit; to nullify the profession so that its influence shall be lost. It is then that reaction is frequently experienced, the natural recoil from deep emotions and excited feelings. Deep feeling seldom lasts in its intensity and fervor, but gradually gives place to more subdued emotion. The novelty of the new and happy state passes away to a certain extent. And this is the most critical time in the Christian's career. The danger is that the rebound may be too far; that from the height of rapturous emotion, the mind may sink to the depths of indifference and inaction.

This then is the point where the earnest and persevering efforts of the ministry and the church should be specially employed. The object should be, to help those who have recently experienced the new life, to *retain* their interest in spiritual things, to *continue* in the enjoyment of religion, and to *go forward* to higher attainments.

And this is desirable, not only for the church and the cause of religion, but also for the converts themselves. While the church would gain much by the growth in grace of all who become members thereof, they would themselves also reap inestimable advantages. Solicitude for the happiness, and spiritual welfare, of those who profess to be disciples of Christ, should lead to the exercise of a loving watchcare over them, and to the employment of means calculated to help them in overcoming the world, and living the life of the true Christian.

But how may this be done?

By *closely following up their conversion* with instruction, encouragement, guidance, and warning. We all admit the wisdom of following up good impressions. Many efforts are lost and much labor is oftentimes thrown away by the neglect of this. Now conversion is but the starting point of the Christian life. It should be regarded as the foundation, upon which a superstructure of holy deportment and Christian effort is to be built. The evidence of conversion may be perfectly satisfactory; the profession may be fair and promising; and yet for want of care and culture of the tender plant, there may be no growth, and no fruit.

This desirable result may be in part secured by *seeking to impress upon the converts the grave responsibility of the Christian profession*. They should be led to realize how solemn and important was the step which they have taken—how binding the vows which they have made—how high and