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which they had embued their guilty hands. Two thousand more soon cast down their sins and prejudices at the feet of Jesus, and enrolled their names with his disciples. After which 'the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great number of the priests were obedient to the faith.'—(Acts 6. 7.) Here then, we behold, I say not the boundlessness of the mercy of our Lord in the extension of the first offers of salvation to the guiltiest of mankind; but a most illustrious attestation of that spiritual energy which gave such effect to the *foolishness of preaching*. How visionary to the cool and calculating mind of the philosopher—how unpromising even to the Apostles themselves must have appeared the attempt to lay the foundation of the glorious edifice of the Christian Church of Jerusalem; and vain indeed it must have proved, had not the promised presence of the Holy Spirit been signally with them. But the victorious power of truth subdued the hostility of many of 'the seed of Abraham' to the suffering Messiah—caused them to abandon all their downward hopes of earthly power and magnificence—changed the offence of the cross into a source of exultation, and dissolving their tenacious attachment to the law of Moses, taught them, as they turned their eyes from its retiring pomp, to fix them for ever on the Lamb of God; to adopt as expressive of their exalted privileges, the language of inspiration, 'We are the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.'

Success still more distinguished and wonderful, attended the labours of the Apostles among the Gentiles. Controlled by the providence of God, the very measures which were adopted by the enemies of the Gospel to arrest its progress, eminently subserved its interests and diffusion. Thus 'they which were scattered abroad, upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch.'—(Acts 11. 19.) Antioch was the metropolis of Syria, and according to Josephus, the third city for greatness in the Roman Empire. It was not less celebrated for effeminacy and vice. The grove of Daphne, avowedly sacred to voluptuousness, and pleasure bloomed in its vicinity, and by the power of its seductive and malignant attractions, drew the mass of the population of the city within the vortex of licentiousness. Hence 'to live after the manner of Daphne' was a proverbial expression, used to designate the most dissolute way of living. Yet in this abandoned city, while certain of the believers, 'men of Cyprus and Cyrene, spake unto the Grecians, testifying the Lord Jesus, the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.'—(Acts 2. 20, 21.) Were it necessary to dilate more largely on this particular, we might trace the progress, and display the triumphs of the gospel, at Iconium, Derbe, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed in the Apostolic age. Nor was the work interrupted by the death of the Apostles—those revered servants of God. For a long time after they had ascended amidst the flames of persecution, to wear the crown of martyrdom, and shine as the stars forever and ever in the kingdom of heaven, the immortal energies of the Gospel continued to operate with unabated vigour and equal effect. Within three centuries after its first promulgation at Jerusalem, Christianity diffused its celestial light and healing virtue far and wide: it penetrated Gaul, Spain, and Britain, erected its standard on the African shores of the Mediterranean, demolished the shrines of thirty thousand false deities, and became the predominant theological system of the most splendid and powerful monarchy of the world! In this amazingly rapid, and widely-extended spread of the Gospel, though all the world's influence and learning and power were arrayed against it, we are presented with a moral phenomenon which, like the star that conducted the wise men to Bethlehem, leads the mind directly to Him 'with whom all things are possible.' Believers contemplate it,