

inhabitants of the earth, of all ages and generations, in one vast general assembly. All things in heaven, recollect, and all things on the earth that are in Christ are to be gathered in one.

Did any other dispensations accomplish this? Contemplate the works of all past dispensations, and you will find all were not gathered in one. It is true they were gathered from time to time in the heavens, to wait there for the time when all the righteous of this globe should be gathered into one vast assembly—the fathers with the children, and the children with the fathers: the one could not be perfected without the other.

Herein, then, both the fathers and the children are interested, and the children are benefited through the assistance of the keys handed down from heaven by the fathers; and on the other hand, that portion of the fathers who died in ignorance are benefited by the assistance of the keys committed into the hands of the children who will officiate in their behalf.

But now let us come to particulars in regard to this subject. How do the children officiate in behalf of the fathers? We can officiate while in the flesh so far as ordinances are concerned. We cannot believe for our fathers, we cannot repent for them, we cannot receive the Holy Ghost for our fathers, and we cannot attain to any other point pertaining to the mind or the spirit of man.

Wherein, inquires one, can we benefit our fathers, if we cannot repent for them, nor believe for them, nor receive the Holy Ghost for them? In what manner can we benefit them? I will tell you what we can do. We can be baptized for the dead. Can it be possible that there is such a principle? Turn to the 15th chapter of Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corin-

thians, where you can read the words of the great Apostle upon the subject of baptism for the dead. "Else," said he, "what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

He understood the matter; it was all plain before him; and he was writing to a people who understood it: they had received previous instructions, although these words are contained in what is called Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians; and in this first Epistle we read that he had written another epistle to that same people; but that is lost. If we had that first epistle which Paul refers to in what is now termed "the first Epistle," we should probably find this doctrine fully revealed, for he wrote to them as though they understood all about it. He could with propriety have addressed them in a style something like this—You Corinthians have received the ordinance of baptism for the dead; you have gone forth and been baptized for and in behalf of the dead; you have been buried in water in the likeness of Christ's death, and raised from it in the likeness of his resurrection, in behalf of the dead: and now, inasmuch as you understand it, what will you do, if the dead rise not at all? As much as to say that baptism will give you a full and clear title to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection; and also your dead can rise in the morning of the first resurrection, inasmuch as you have been baptized for them: but if the dead are not raised from their graves, neither you nor they can be benefited by baptism.

This is the argument of Paul. This looks consistent. Those spirits of our fathers whose bodies are in their graves can repent, for they have not lost their agency; they can believe in Jesus Christ, for that is an act of the mind: they can reform from