

read the 8th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where you will find an account of the labors of Philip in the city of Samaria. It seems that Philip had power and authority to preach the Gospel and to baptize men and women, but not to administer all the ordinances. I have the idea that he had the same authority as John the Baptist—the authority to baptize, but not to confer the Holy Ghost. We find that when John was preaching, he said that there would one come after him, whose shoes he was not worthy to bear, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. John baptized with water, but he did not confer any further gift or blessing—he had not the authority so to do. Philip seemed to have the same authority, for the sacred writer says that when the Apostles of Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Gospel at the hands of Philip, they sent unto them two Apostles, for as yet, although the Samaritans had been baptized with water, the Holy Ghost had not descended upon any of them; and we are told that when the Apostles came unto them, they prayed with them, and laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. Nothing is said about the hands of the Apostles being laid upon those only who were intended for the ministry, but the ordinance was administered to all who had received baptism at the hands of Philip, without distinction of sex or station.

Another instance in support of this view we find in the 19th of the Acts. We read there that when Paul was passing through the upper coasts he came to Ephesus and he found there certain disciples who said they had been baptized unto John's baptism, but when he asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost they said they had not so much as

heard of it. Then, we are informed, they were baptized in the name of the Lord, and when Paul, who had the necessary authority, had laid his hands upon them they received the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues and prophesied. Many other proofs on this point might be adduced, but these are sufficient. From what has been said we learn that the first principle of the Gospel is belief in Jesus Christ; the second principle is repentance of sin, and the third, baptism for the remission of sins.

"Ah!" says one, "Cannot I come to the foot of the cross and, through the atoning blood of Jesus, have my sins washed away without baptism?" I doubt not that hundreds, in various nations and generations, who have been in ignorance of the true Gospel, and far removed from those who had authority to administer its ordinances, have had their sins blotted out. God has looked in mercy upon them, and on account of their sincerity has witnessed unto them that he accepted the broken spirits and contrite hearts which they offered unto him. I cannot doubt this; but wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached in its fullness, none can obtain the remission of sins only in the way that God has pointed out, and that is by baptism by one having the authority from God to administer that ordinance.

Supposing that I, with the views which I have of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, were today outside of the church of God, and I were to say, "I will not be baptized for the remissions of sins. My father or my grandfather was a good Methodist, or a good Presbyterian or Baptist, or a good sectarian of some other denomination, and he told me that he had experienced a change of heart and I believe that he had his sins washed away through the atoning