

blood of Jesus Christ, and on this account I will not submit to the ordinance of baptism which is preached to me as necessary to salvation, but I will seek for the remission of my sins the way my father or grandfather did," how do you think it would be with me? Should I obtain the remission of my sins at the hands of God? There would be no remission of sins for such an individual in this life. Light has come into the world, God has revealed to men the true principle by which remission of sins can be obtained, namely, baptism, and when that is taught to them and they refuse to obey it, condemnation follows, and the blessings will be withheld which were granted in days when, in ignorance, men taught the Lord in faith and humility and with broken and contrite spirits.

We now come to the fourth and last initiatory principle of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. "Is it not possible," says one, "for a man to receive the Holy Ghost without being baptized for the remission of sins, and having hands laid upon him?" Says the reader of Scripture, "I recollect that Cornelius, the history of whose conversion is contained in the 10th chapter of the Acts, received the Holy Ghost, and yet he was not baptized; and if he did, is it not possible for others to do the same?" Let those who think so read the history very carefully, and they will find that in bestowing the Holy Ghost upon Cornelius without baptism, God had a purpose in view. Cornelius was the first Gentile unto whom the Gospel was preached. The prevalent belief among the disciples, and one which they, being Jews, had inherited through the traditions of their fathers, was that the Gentiles were

not to have the privilege of enjoying the blessings of the Gospel, they were not for them, and the disciples were not disposed to administer its ordinances to them. You recollect what Peter said when the Holy Ghost descended upon Cornelius—this uncircumcised man—and his house, whom they had supposed were without the pale of the Gospel—"Who can forbid water, seeing that they have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Peter cited this bestowal of the Holy Ghost upon Cornelius and his house, as a proof that the ordinance of baptism should be administered to them, and to all believing repentant Gentiles as well as to the house of Israel. This, in connection with the vision which Peter had, you recollect it, wherein he saw a sheet let down from heaven, containing all manner of beasts, clean and unclean, he being commanded to arise, kill and eat thereof, had dispossessed his mind of the prejudice which he had entertained, in common with his fellow believers, that the Gospel was for the Jews only. And when he saw Cornelius and his house thus blessed, he inquired of his brethren what there was to prevent the ordinance of baptism being administered to them, and they were baptized by Peter.

Cornelius did not say, as many, doubtless, would say today, "We have received the Holy Ghost, and having obtained this evidence of our acceptance with God, what is the use of our being baptized? Is it likely that God would have given us the Holy Ghost if he had not forgiven our sins?" These inquiries, I think, would be made by hundreds in our day under such circumstances. But not so with Cornelius: he had heard the Gospel preached to him by Peter, and though he had received the Holy Ghost, he believed it was still neces-