

RESULTS OF OBEDIENCE BY FAITH (1)

By Keith Greer

Chaos and confusion plague the landscape of today's religious world. Atheism, immorality, and willful ignorance are rampant among people who are lost and dying in sin. Jesus taught that unless one has proper knowledge, confusion is inevitable, "That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me." {John 17:21} God warned about the danger of the false teacher who leads the unsuspecting into a religious maze – seemingly with no sure way of escape. While the world may be confused concerning the source of salvation, God does not recognize such a problem. His word speaks loud and clear about how we become saved and remain saved. People could eliminate chaos and division in an instant, if they would simply listen to God and take Him at His word. Simply put – we must have sufficient faith to obey what God has said. Mankind offers many plans (theories) of salvation, but God gave only **ONE**. God's one gospel has the power to dispel every false theory offered by those who seek to confuse the uninformed. About what are these people uninformed? Failure to follow God's instructions to the letter will cause us to come up short.

Division and anarchy are inevitable among those who turn their backs on God's sacred Scriptures. The first century also had its share of such people. "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed." {Galatians 1:6-9} Paul had previously warned of this danger among God's own people: "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves." {Acts 20:29,30} He also told Timothy that in the "latter days" some would "depart from the faith," desiring error instead of truth. {1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:2,3} Only true Bible faith can save a person. We refer to this as obedience by faith. Let's discuss what it means to obey by faith, examine the Bible examples of some who did obey by faith, and learned this powerful lesson.

Pentecost. Converts: Jews gathered in Jerusalem for the Jewish feast of Pentecost. Background: Guilty of murdering God's Son with their lawless hands. {Acts 2:36} Transition: When they requested an answer to their problem, it came quickly – repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins. {Acts 2:38}. Became: "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them...praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." {Acts 2:41,47} God's Warning: Peter warned of the danger of returning to their old paths. "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: 'A dog returns to his own

vomit,' and, 'a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.'" {2 Peter 2:20-22) Examine the facts in the account in Acts 2:1-47.

What one can clearly see are the divinely revealed results of obedience by faith. A closer examination will show this in every case where sinners were converted. ***