

# ***IT IS SETTLED!***

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

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Last week, in our study of the conversion of Cornelius, as recorded in Acts 10 and 11, a comparison was made between the conversion of Saul of Tarsus and Cornelius. Both these men, as sinners and not as children of God, were spoken to directly by spirit beings; Saul, by Jesus Christ Himself, and Cornelius, by an angel from God. Both were told to do something. Saul was told to go into the city of Damascus and **there** he would be told what he must do (Acts 9:6). Cornelius was to send for Peter, and **then** he would be told "*what thou oughtest to do*" (Acts 10:6).

The question we want to consider is: Were either, or both, of these men now saved, after being spoken to by spirit beings? Note that both men had not yet been told what they must do. In Matthew 28:19f, Jesus instructed the eleven (Judas was dead, and Matthias had not yet been appointed an apostle) "*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:...*" Saul was an enemy of the Lord, consenting to the death of the children of God, or casting them into prison. He had to be told what he **must do** (Jesus' words). Saul was told by a disciple of the Lord, Ananias (Acts 9:10,18). Cornelius, and those he had assembled in his household, were told by Peter what they must do. They were commanded to be baptized in the name of the Lord. That sounds a lot like Matthew 28:19, doesn't it? Considering what we learn from the New Testament about the conversion of these two men, the answer to the question which opened this paragraph is "**No.**"

Why were these two men not saved at the time they saw either the Lord Jesus or an angel? Because that was not the will of the Lord as to how man would be saved. Paul (the man Saul, after his name was changed - Acts 13:9) explains this very thing in Romans 10:13,14: "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*" What do you mean, Paul? Was a preacher necessary in the first century, when miracles and visions occurred? That's what the Lord said in Matthew 28:19. That is what happened in Acts 9:17,18, and in Acts 10:47,48.

No person was saved, beginning at Acts 2 down through the ages even until today, without following the commands of the Lord as set forth in Matthew 28:18,19. Man must be taught (we can do that by studying our Bibles; indeed, we must make sure that what we are being taught is the truth, recorded in God's Word). Man must believe God's Word exactly as it has been given to us. By obeying God's Word, we are saved. The Lord's commands included baptism, rather than excluded it. Each example of conversion recorded in the book of Acts included it. The conversion of Cornelius included it (Acts 10:48). In the first century, no vision or visitation by a spirit being saved man. We can be sure no **claimed** vision today (there are **no** genuine visions today) saves man.