

# *IT IS SETTLED!*

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

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*By Howell Lasseter*

Our theme passage states that man is to *"fear God, and keep his commandments."* That includes each of us. As an employee, we are to follow the directives given by our employer; that is a "work" we are to accomplish. When we keep the commandments of God, we are doing His work. From John 6:28,29, notice *"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* In Hebrews 11:6, we learn *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* To be diligent in seeking would be a work, wouldn't it?

Last week, we learned from Acts 8:3 that the man Saul made havoc of the church. As we study Bible examples of people who were religious, but wrong, we continue this week in Acts 8. Look at Acts 8:5: *"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people, with one accord, gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did."* What did they hear? Notice verse 12: *"And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."* How does this compare with what Jesus taught the eleven apostles (Judas Iscariot was dead) just before His ascension back to Heaven? Look at Mark 16:15,16: *"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."* Philip had gone to Samaria - a part of the world; he had preached to the Samaritans; they believed and were baptized. That is exactly what Jesus commanded, wasn't it?

Another example is Simon. He had, in time past, bewitched the Samaritans with sorceries. What happened to him? *"Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done"* (Acts 8:13). That also is what Jesus commanded in Mark 16:15,16, isn't it?

Continuing on in Acts 8, we read that an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, instructing him to *"arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza..."* He obeyed the command, and came in contact with a man from Ethiopia. This man was a religious man, having been to Jerusalem to worship, as the law of Moses commanded. As he was returning home, he was reading from God's Word; he was reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip preached unto him Jesus (Acts 8:35). From Acts 8:36-39, we find that this man believed Philip's preaching, and was baptized - just as Jesus had commanded. The Ethiopian was a religious man, having traveled hundreds of miles to Jerusalem to worship. He was religiously wrong. He changed! As you study your Bible, you can see that what these religious people were taught by Philip is what Jesus commanded. They obeyed Jesus' commandments. Today, we, too, must obey Jesus' commandments in order to be saved.

We hear often today that an angel appeared to a person. Or, some say they had a vision or dream. They say they were saved by these experiences. However, there is no example in the gospel of Jesus Christ of any person being saved without a preacher being present, teaching the person what he/she must do to be saved. More next week.