

## Who Obeys The Gospel?

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by Wayne Goff

If you want to think about **who** becomes a Christian, I would suggest you first look at the book of **Acts**, often called “The Book of Conversions.” It will help us to appreciate salvation from this perspective.

1. **Those Who Gladly Received The Word:** *“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them”* (Acts 2:41). In order to **“gladly receive”** the truth, these people had to believe that they were responsible for putting to death the Son of God, repent of their sins, be baptized and change their entire lives.
2. **Those Who Believed The Word:** *“However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand”* (Acts 4:4). Read the context, and you will learn again that those who *“believed the word”* confessed their part in killing the Prince of life, and were told to *“repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”* (Acts 3:19). This came even at a time when the preachers were being persecuted!
3. **Samaritans:** *“But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized”* (Acts 8:12). Though despised by the Jews in general, gracious Christians preached the Gospel *“to every creature”* (Mk. 16:15) and to *“all nations”* (Matt. 28:18). No partiality or prejudice was shown in reaching out to men and women to be converted.
4. **A Sorcerer:** *“But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great. ... Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done”* (Acts 8:5, 13). It didn’t matter what **sins or lifestyle** one lived before obeying the Gospel (see 1 Cor. 6:9-11), all that mattered was that one believe in Jesus and obey His gospel and the past was forgiven! What a privilege! What an opportunity to begin new again!
5. **An Ethiopian Eunuch:** A man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, the queen of Ethiopia was converted when Philip preached Christ to him from the Old Testament book of Isaiah! Acts 8:26-36. Having heard the Gospel, he asked, *“What hinders me from being baptized?”* (Acts 8:36). Philip baptized him with the confession that he believed Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:37-38)! Once again, nationality or political power did not prevent this great man from obeying the gospel!
6. **Saul of Tarsus, a Persecutor:** Now if anyone should be prevented from obeying the Gospel, you would think it would a murderer of Christians! But no, Jesus of Nazareth appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus and told him to go into Damascus where he would be told what to do. Then Jesus sent Ananias to Saul, and he was baptized **for the remission of sins** — including what he had done to Christians! (Acts 9:18-20) Paul later recounted that Ananias had said to him, *“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord”* (Acts 22:16). Saul changed his name to Paul, became an apostle of Jesus Christ, and later explained that even though he was “chief” of sinners, *“...in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life”* (1 Tim. 1:16). In short, anyone who is *humble* enough to believe in Jesus as their Savior, *repent* of their sins, and *be baptized* to wash away their sins **can** obey the Gospel! This can be **anyone** — man or woman, any nationality, any sinful background — if only they will humbly obey Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord!

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