

HOW ARE PEOPLE MADE BELIEVERS?

1. Text: Acts 11:11-18
2. Here in this context the conversion of Cornelius is described. And from this incident we learn how people come to faith.
3. Let's answer our question with three questions?

I. **By What Authority Will We Settle This?**

1. Strong denominational doctrines affirm faith comes directly into the heart of a person by God's or the Holy Spirit's working.
2. Often people testify to this being the case. They will tell of some experience with its accompanying emotions as the point of their salvation.
3. We cannot and should not deny people's experiences or emotions. We can, however, question their interpretation or meaning.
4. I Timothy 1:10 speaks of things "contrary to sound doctrine." Our doctrine comes from Scripture. (II Timothy 3:16) So we settle the matter of by truth of God's word. (John 17:17)

II. **What Is The Issue Clearly Stated?**

1. It is not that God makes believers. He does.
2. It is not that the Holy Spirit is involved. He is.
3. It is not a question of God's power and ability to do as He wills.
4. It is the direct operation by divine power on the human heart or inspired words working on the sinner.
5. God works through means. I Peter 1:12 is an example as is I Corinthians 2:9-13. "President Bush invaded Iraq."

III. **What Saith The Scriptures?**

1. Acts 11:14 "Words by which you will be saved."
2. Luke 8:4-15 Satan knows the power of words.
3. John 17:20 "I pray for those who will believe through their word."
4. John 20:30-31 "These were written that you may believe."
5. Acts 15:7 "By my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe."
6. Romans 10:14 "How shall thy believe in Him of whom they have not heard?"
7. Summary: Romans 10:17 Faith comes by hearing the word of God.
8. Is Lydia an exception? Acts 16:14-15. No.
9. Is Acts 13:48 an exception? "As many as had been appointed or ordained to eternal life believed." No. Word means appoint or determine. Can be passive from "were ordained," or middle "determined themselves." Best is latter in contrast to 13:46.
10. The uniform witness of New Testament conversion accounts.

Conclusion:

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