

## ***Immersed in Jesus***

When a person immerses himself in something, he totally surrounds himself with it. He spends time thinking about it and making plans around it. It occupies his mind, utilizes his energy and expends his resources.

People can immerse themselves in many different things. Some are immersed in hobbies, recreation or sports such as hunting, fishing, college football, baseball, golf, racing, collecting, or gardening. Others are immersed in their work or school. Some are immersed in their children or grandchildren. When a person is seriously sick, it is easy to become immersed with health concerns.

As Christians, "we were all baptized into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Most of us understand that the word "baptized" means "immersed." But what we may not have thought much about is the connection between being immersed in water and being immersed in Jesus. The apostle Paul puts it this way in Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Those of us who have been "baptized into Christ" are to have put Him on like a garment. We are to be covered up with Him -- immersed in Him.

By itself, immersion in water does nothing to change a person's life. But when that immersion is the beginning of being overwhelmed with Jesus Christ, lives are truly changed. Baptism into Christ results in a person being raised to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17). This new life is one that is immersed in Jesus.

Every sinner needs to be immersed in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). But every one who is immersed in water is thus obligated to live a new life immersed in Jesus. Are you immersed in Him? "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" (Romans 13:14).

**- by Steve Klein**

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## ***Who Wrote the Bible?***

Down through the years there have been those who have doubted the inspiration of the Bible. There are those who look upon the Bible as being nothing more than a dead letter, or some fable, or a group of fables that have been passed on from generation to generation. Others feel that the Bible is but a part of the revelation that is from God, and so and so on. Many who hold these views claim to be of God but such automatically places them in the category of the modernist or even the infidel.

In considering this question we can be sure that certain men did not have a part in writing the Bible. For instance, we know that the infidel did not write the Bible inasmuch as the Bible condemns such an individual. We read: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." (Ps. 14:1). Again, we know that the modernist did not write the Bible in that the Bible upholds the virgin birth of Christ, etc. (Matt. 1:18-25). We also know that a denominationalist did not write the Bible because the word reveals that there is but one true church. Paul stated in his day that there was but one body, or one church. (Eph. 4:4; Col. 1:18). Then too, we know that a Catholic did not write the Bible in that the scriptures nowhere suggest that Peter was ever Pope, or even came near to being the Pope of the church. On the contrary, the Bible teaches that Christ is head of the church and is saviour of the body. (Eph. 5:23). Now we know that these individuals, and many others, did not write the Bible, or have part in writing the Bible, or else they would have penned it to suit their own doctrine, or doctrines. At any rate, we know that such individuals would not have condemned themselves by their own writings. Think seriously about these statements.

If the people mentioned did not write the Bible then who did? Well, the answer is very simple. The Bible itself reveals that inspired men of God took part in this great work. Peter tells us: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:21). Then the apostle Paul said: "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God." (2 Tim. 3:16). Hence, the Bible is from God. Since such is true, then it is a holy or divine book. The scripture nowhere contradicts itself, but rather agrees', even though a number of inspired men had part in penning, it. Many, many arguments could be given to uphold the Bible as being the pure word of God.

**- by J. C. Choate**

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## ***Forgiveness (2<sup>nd</sup> in a series)***

Last week we learned that unilateral forgiveness can and should be offered when situations arise that do not involve sin. For instance, if someone 'hurts my feelings' or does something that leaves me feeling slighted - these may reflect bad judgment or carelessness, but there is no sin, and I can just let these things pass. I can forgive independent of the actions of the other person – and I should.

However, if sin has occurred, this changes things completely. In cases where sin is involved we are instructed to forgive just like God forgives: *“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you”* (Ephesians 4:32). It's hard to imagine how a statement could be any clearer. We are to forgive 'just as' God does. Therefore, it is important to observe how He extends forgiveness.

First, He is willing to forgive, and we should be, too. Unfortunately we sometimes act like we want to keep an issue alive. We carry ill will and have a 'chip on our shoulder'. These things ought not to be. God *“desires all men to be saved”* (1 Timothy 2:3,4) and is *“not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:9). He is clearly willing to forgive, and we must be, too.

In fact, we could say that God is 'aggressive' about forgiving us. He *“commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8). God didn't have to do that, but He did. Our Lord taught us that we should have that same urgent desire to forgive those who wrong us. *“If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother”* (Matthew 18:15). Don't wait. Take the initiative. Be like God. Be 'aggressive' in making forgiveness available to the one who has sinned against you.

***(continued next week)***

***- by Greg Gwin***