

YOU ARE  
COMPLETE  
in  
HIM.  
COLOSSIANS 2:10 NKJV

A new creation focus through Colossians ...

## Buried and Raised in Immersion

The apostle Peter said, "Immersion now saves you" (1 Peter 3:21). The notes in *The Hebrew-Greek Key Word Study Bible*, New American Standard Bible, edited by Spiros Zodhiates, says this in its commentary on 1 Peter 3:21: "[Baptism] is the testimony of an already cleansed soul"; in other words, immersion does *not* save a person, it is merely the public declaration that this individual is already saved. Peter made the simple statement in a portion of a sentence; Spiros Zodhiates took a page and a half of his publication of the Bible to justify his contradiction of Peter. Some relevant

notes on the same topic from the Zondervan NIV Study Bible state: "In NT [New Testament] times baptism so closely followed conversion that the two were considered part of one event ... baptism is not a means by which we enter into a vital relationship with Jesus Christ ..." The thrust again is that conversion or salvation occurs prior to immersion, and immersion is not necessary to have fellowship with Christ. These notes from these study Bibles are not aberrations; they are standard fare from the study Bible notes and sundry commentaries. Each individual who begins to look into this eternally vital issue is going to have to figure out whether they believe the apostle Peter or the commentaries. Indeed, all the writings of the New Testament are consistent, as is to be expected, with Peter's simple asseveration: "Immersion now saves you."

- **In Him** — All the eternal blessings are "in Christ." God is not going to allow anyone to make an "end run" around Christ; as Jesus Himself stated, "No one comes to the Father, but through Me" (John 14:6). Hence, anyone outside of Christ is lost and damned to hell for all eternity; the only solution is to enter "into Christ." Scripturally, how can a person enter into Christ? Once again, the answer is simple and consistent: the unsaved has to be "immersed into Christ" (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27). The apostle Paul, then, in corresponding with the Colossian Christians, exhorts the brethren not to be taken captive by philosophies alien to the teaching and principles of God's word, turning their attention to what is "in Christ." *In Him* dwells the fulness of Deity; *in Him* the saints have been made complete; *in Him* the brethren were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision.
- **Immersion and burial** — The means by which the individual participates in being made complete and sharing in the spiritual circumcision is explained by the apostle: "Having been buried with Him in immersion, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12). The word of God is again consistent, describing the eradication of the old self and the bringing of a new creature into existence. "We have been buried with Him in immersion," Paul reminded the brethren in Rome (Romans 6:4). In this way the "old self was crucified with Him" and the "body of sin" was done away with (Romans 6:6). What power, and what a blessing!
- **Immersion and resurrection** — Just as a spiritual death really occurs in immersion, so also a spiritual resurrection occurs when the individual comes up out of the water. The newly spiritually born saints are raised up with Christ "through faith in the working of God." What is seen by the physical eye is that the individual was dry, then he is wet. But those who operate by the faith revealed in the New Testament writings recognize that God's awesome and tremendous power was used to bring this new creature into existence in the likeness of Jesus' resurrection, but in the realm not seen by the physical eye.

It is highly significant that — although the individual must personally believe the gospel of Christ, and be obedient to it in immersion — it God who does the work! Immersion is not a work a believer does to try to earn his salvation; it is his willing participation in the plan and power of God. It is a marvelous plan, and it is energized by mega-power!!

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