

In II Tim. 1:10 we read: **“Jesus Christ... hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”** The “gospel” spoken of here would have to be the one that the Apostle Paul (the writer of I Tim. and II Tim.) claimed was given to him, i.e., the **“gospel of Christ”** (spoken of, as such, 12 times in his epistles), which eliminates human achievement as a means of obtaining immortality. In his letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle proclaimed: **“For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest an man should boast.”** (Eph. 2:8,9) Moreover, he said in his letter to Titus that salvation is **“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior...”** (Titus 3:5,6).

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The “we”, “us” and “ye” of these passages refer to those who are in what the Apostle called the **“body of Christ”** (I Cor 12:27). Those who are in this spiritual body have received the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and with it the seal of the Holy Spirit which is the **“earnest of our inheritance”**(Eph. 1:14), the guarantee of God that we will exist **“in glory”** (Col 3:4) with him beyond this life. From this the question naturally arises: who then is admitted into this “body” to which Paul refers? Those who have lived a godly life, and have been careful to have maintained a record of good works? No. On the contrary, it is those who have ceased from reliance on their good works (Rom. 4:5), agreed with God that they have in actuality, done nothing good at all (Romans 3:12); that they are, indeed, “ungodly sinners” (Rom. 5:6,8), and have trusted in what Christ did on their behalf --- **“died for our sins...and rose again the third day...for our justification.”** (I Cor. 15:3,4; Rom. 4:25) --- for their salvation.

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Great achievement will, doubtless, gain one a type of immortality in this world, but it will never get anyone out of this world alive. There is but one way to obtain a ticket to this kind of immortality --- Jesus Christ (John 14:6). I Tim. 6:16 says that he (Christ) **“...only hath immortality, dwelling in a light whom no man hath seen, nor can see;”**I Thess. 4:16,17 says that on an appointed day he will **“...descend from heaven with a shout...and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds...and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”** 1 Cor. 15:24 and 2 Cor. 5:2, teach that when that particular event occurs, those of us who are in Christ’s body, will **“put on immortality,”**(1 Cor. 15:54) and be **“clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.”** (2 Cor. 5:2) Every Other belief system in the world demands that a person “do something” to gain immortality.

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The grace of God demands that, to be saved, each person must cease from believing that he can “do something”, and instead, must simply **“...believe on the Lord Jesus Christ...”** (believing that he died for each person’s sins) --- **“and thou shalt be saved.”** (Acts 16:31) Have you ever believed on the Lord Jesus Christ? If not, believe on him right now, and be assured that, regardless of what you achieve (or fail to achieve) in this life, you have eternal life!

Mike Schroeder

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