

## *Self-Analysis versus God Is*

Carl H. Stevens Jr. is pastor of Greater Grace World Outreach located in Baltimore, Maryland. Pastor Stevens is also chancellor of Maryland Bible College & Seminary and host of the international Christian radio program "The Grace Hour." This booklet was created from a message preached by Pastor Stevens.

Pastor Stevens can be seen weekly on cable television stations throughout the United States. Call us for information regarding programming in your area.

*All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.*

GRACE PUBLICATIONS

P.O. BOX 18715

BALTIMORE, MD 21206

Printed in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

Copyright © 1997

in *Hallmarks from the Heart, Vol. II*

Reprinted 2005

Grace Publications is a ministry of  
Greater Grace World Outreach, Inc.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Introduction* . . . . . 5

*Chapter 1* . . . . . 7

*ONLY GOD KNOWS*

*Chapter 2* . . . . . 12

*A NEW WAY OUT*

*Chapter 3* . . . . . 18

*THE ANSWER FOR FAILURE*

*CONCLUSION* . . . . . 24



## INTRODUCTION

“But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

“Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah” (Psalm 4:3-4).

Much has been said among Christian psychiatrists and psychologists concerning the proper analytical methods needed to help a believer discover how to experience the life of God. All of us, at one time or another, have been victims of our own self-analysis. But the Word of God makes it clear that self-analysis has no value at all in a believer's life.

In Psalm 4, the meaning of the word *sin* implies occupation with self: Commune with your heart upon your bed, and “self” not. Self-analysis is one of the most subtle activities, yet scores of misguided Christians do it frequently, communing with their own “selves,” analyzing and

trying to discover a better way to live for God.

In this booklet, you will discover that the only real release comes in looking away from self and looking unto Jesus. He is the way, He is the truth, and in Him we have overcoming life.

*Chapter One*

## ONLY GOD KNOWS

Jeremiah 17:9, in its description of the human heart, tells us the reason that self-analysis is not profitable. The heart is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” The next part of this verse reveals the problem with self-analysis: “...who can know it?” A Spirit-filled person can never know his heart. You can commune with your self all you want to, but you will never be able to find release.

No one but God can ever know your heart. Trying to figure out where you went wrong profits nothing. Knowing how wicked ‘Adam’ is doesn’t change Adam’s wickedness. Knowing where you went wrong doesn’t keep you from going wrong again. It takes more than knowledge about the old sin nature to keep you from sinning. Jesus didn’t say, “Be occupied with Adam until I come, and try to figure things out.” No, He said we are to be occupied with Christ

until He returns (Luke 19:13).

Jeremiah 17:10 explains why you never need to enter into self-analysis: "I the LORD search the heart." Hundreds have spent hours searching their hearts, but the Psalmist prayed like this: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me...and see if there be any wicked way in me." He allowed the One who has all knowledge to do the searching.

Satan has a field day as he causes people to search their hearts in the name of Jesus. We get frustrated searching for answers, and eventually we grow weary. We end up experiencing who we are in Adam. We may discover all the reasons why we sin, but we leave out one fact: We are desperately wicked, and we will never change! But the Lord searches the heart and tries the reins in order to give to every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings. The Lord does the searching.

In John 15:22, Jesus said, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." Self-analysis is nothing more than a cloak for sin. Suppose you were able to figure out why you failed at the age of twelve, what your grandfather did to you when you were six, and how

somebody treated you at fourteen. Suppose you figured it all out, wrote it down, and rehearsed it until you had it memorized. Would it give you life? Would it make you jump up and down and rejoice in Jesus?

### *No Way Out*

There has never been a time when God has endorsed self-analysis. I am not interested in deriving my reality from Adam's human viewpoint. The people who do usually end up on tranquilizers. When they discover what Adam is like, they start popping pills or going back into sin so they won't have to experience the essence of their old sin nature. Self-analysis can only make you see how bad you really are. Many men in this ministry enter into self-analysis, and they don't like what they discover, yet they are occupied with it.

Self-analysis will always lead to a dead end. Apart from Jesus Christ, there is no way out. If you were to think about twenty-five things that affect you, what would you have accomplished? Would it change your heart to discover how bad Adam is? No, it would not.

Many people live on fruit they have gathered at the Tree of Knowledge of Good and

Evil—the only tree in the garden of Eden that was prohibited by God. Through self-analysis based on self-knowledge, they discover the awful truth about themselves. After taking advantage of the knowledge gathered from the evil part of the tree, they go to the “good” part to find relief. They make a confession like, “Because of all I know, I will not fail again!” But they are still eating from the Tree of Knowledge, and the flesh will fail.

Even though a person is saved and receives good Bible teaching, he may still be lost in his old identity. But the answer is not in self-analysis. It is in humility through the Cross, obedience to the Word, and, like the prodigal, going home to the Father.

The prodigal son said in Luke 15:18, “I will arise and go to my father.” He did not linger in self-analysis. He summarized his past with one sentence: “I have sinned.” The issue was not what made him sin; he made himself sin. His desperate heart was the issue. The prodigal did not wait to discover the root cause. He said, “I did what I did and I am going home to my father, just as I am—bare feet, ragged clothes, and a terrible heart. I think I will have to work as hired help—but I’m going home! I am not going

to make my father meet any conditions. I am going on the terms of humility, on the terms of the Cross, and on the terms of submission. Whatever I must do, I will do it.”

No self-analysis—just humble repentance.

The only one who can help me is my Father, who is God, so I am going home to my Father. Evil thoughts, adultery, fornication, murder, theft, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, blasphemy, pride, an evil eye, foolishness—all these things come out of the heart of a man (Mark 7:21-23). If I enter into self-analysis, I will just come up with relevant associations to these things, which mean nothing except that I have sinned. What’s more, I am a sinner.

Knowing this, I go to my Father. I forget what I have done, and, turning around, I go to Someone who will be different, entirely new, and I am going to come under His headship.

## *Chapter Two*

# A NEW WAY OUT

Many people in the Bible said, “I have sinned,” and every one of them had a different idea of what they had done. In Numbers 22:34, Balaam said, “I have sinned,” and he meant it and got right. Achan said, “I have sinned” in Joshua 7:20. King Saul said, “I have sinned” in 1 Samuel 15:24, but he ended up wanting to take his own life. His self-analysis resulted in being suicidal. King Saul was occupied with self-analysis but not with forgiveness toward himself. He was occupied with who he was in Adam instead of who Christ is—with guilt instead of cleansing.

If you continue to live in self-analysis, you will never have a repentant heart because there is nothing about your self that can repent. Only your faith in God can make you turn. In Psalm 85:4, David said, “Lord, turn me.” Only the Lord can turn us. Only the Lord can give us a new

heart. Only the Spirit of God empowers us in the authority of love. Not one single thing about your self can do it.

You can stir up members of a congregation to analyze why the church isn't more effective, and you'll come up with nothing but negative stimuli, even though what you may find may be true. But if you can get the same Body of believers to look at Jesus Christ, you will get them to look without self-analysis, and they will be victorious. If one sins, he simply says, "I have sinned."

The reason thousands cannot experience the yoke that is easy and the burden that is light is that Christians will not be simple enough to receive as a child and just look.

In Numbers 21, the Israelites were afflicted because of their sin. Still, they were God's people, not heathen. They were simply to look, not to analyze. They were not to ask questions, they were not to wonder "why," even though they had sinned bitterly. They were to do nothing but look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2), the One who identified with man's sin in order to bear our sins, die, and bury the old sin nature. Just look at the Substitute, and be healed. John 3:14 is a New Testa-

ment commentary on Numbers 21, which proves that this applies to us. The Word of God says in Isaiah 45:22, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." People think this speaks only of salvation, but the connotation is, "Look unto Me, and be delivered as you look." The word *saved* also means *delivered*. I don't care what the problem is. Don't analyze it. Look—and be delivered.

Satan has a program. He says, "Come over here just a moment. Don't you want patience and understanding? You want somebody to love you, don't you? Remember your past, when you started getting strange? People don't understand you, do they?" Here you are on the earth, talking about Adam, communing with the devil, talking about the past (which you can do nothing about). Even if you knew every reason why, it would do you absolutely no good at all. You would only have more knowledge about how evil you are. All you would be doing is learning more about what makes you so evil—and that's all it is: self-analysis.

### *Forsake the Ways of the Old Man*

"Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." When you are

involved in self-analysis, you are not forsaking your thoughts. That is why Ephesians 5:11-12 says we should have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, for it is a shame even to speak of the evil they do because those are Adam's thoughts.

The whole plan of God is for you to forsake Adam's thoughts. The whole plan of modern psychiatry is for you to analyze Adam's thoughts. It is a trick of the angel of light to deceive you by your knowledge of good and evil because of your "need." You begin to rationalize it instead of crucifying Adam. While *your* answer is rationalization, God's answer is crucifixion. Satan tries to get you to preserve your life through his influence at the good part of the Tree of Knowledge so that you do not forsake your adamic thoughts.

### *Though You Fall Seven Times in a Day*

Instead, we need to turn, look unto Jesus, and say, "Lord, I can have mercy toward myself to the measure that I have forsaken my sin not only in deed but in thought. I will not condemn myself for my sin, nor will I rationalize why I did it seven times in a day, but I will accept the cleansing and the purging. I am looking right at

You—and that’s all I see, Lord!” He will reassure you that you are being delivered. There is no other way. Start walking. And though you are looking in your heart, begin walking with your eyes on Jesus. Though you turn a hundred different ways, keep your eyes fixed on the Lord.

Forsake the thoughts that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God, and have no cloak for your sins. They were gone the moment you confessed them. In 2 Samuel 12:13, David said, “I have sinned.” The prodigal son said in Luke 15:18, “I have sinned.” Both of them got right, instantly. In Luke 5:8, Peter confessed his sinfulness, and he instantly got right. He didn’t analyze why he sinned; he didn’t analyze the degree of his sins. He just said, “I have sinned.” And then he looked at Jesus.

You know what most of you do? You confess your sin and then dwell on it. It haunts you that you do it so often, but there is nothing in you that can stop—except by looking at Jesus. Nothing else can stop you. What about Judas Iscariot? Jesus didn’t take Judas’ life. Judas entered into self-destruction and took his own life—because of self-analysis. Judas recognized his sin, and he was right on, just like the others who confessed, “I have sinned.” Some meant it and got right.

Others said it just because they were caught, and they went into a godless eternity. When Judas Iscariot said, "I have sinned," his self-analysis was proper. Obviously, he wouldn't have committed suicide if he hadn't been sorry. After he analyzed what he did, he was sorry. But that didn't save him. Self-analysis and sorrow and confession won't save you.

Confession is necessary to purge a guilty conscience, but we are saved by grace through faith that comes by looking unto Jesus. "Look unto me all ye ends of the earth and be saved." Look at the brazen serpent and be healed. That is what saves you and heals you. Nothing else does. Self-analysis and all the sincerity of professional analysis will never stop you from sinning. Unless you look unto Jesus, these methods will only condemn you and reveal how bad you are and the guilt you should have because of what you have done.

The Word of God always has something to say once you have Jesus Christ for your provision. Don't be hard on yourself, even though you hate what you have done. Just look at Jesus. Don't condemn yourself and put on a cloak for your sins. Look unto Jesus and be made whole.

## *Chapter Three*

# THE ANSWER FOR FAILURE

“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.

“He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:18-19).

In Job 11:14, the Bible says, “If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.” If you talk about your past sins, you are not putting it far away. The word used for *far* is the same word used for what God did with our sins. He cast them far away, into the depths of the sea. If we put our sins far away, we won’t analyze them because they are buried. It is a shame to dwell on your failures, resurrecting what has been forgiven and forgotten.

The answer to any failure is this: Christ keeps us from falling (Jude 24), not self-analysis. Jesus Christ is able to make us stand (Romans 14:4), not self-analysis. We look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). We don't look within through self-analysis. This is the only way that the weakest person can ever have victory. It is the victory of 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 that makes us steadfast and immovable and always abounding.

### *Don't Dig Up the Past*

Self-analysis repudiates the mind of Christ and excludes any opportunity to reign in grace. So, put the iniquities far from you. Don't let them dwell in your tabernacle. If you are able to dig up what you did years ago, then obviously you haven't had a healing of the memory, and the Blood hasn't cleansed your conscience (Hebrews 9:14). This reveals you don't believe God's promise that He remembers our sins no more (Hebrews 8:12). But if you have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16), then you, too, will remember your sins no more!

Ephesians 4:22 teaches us to "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful

lusts.” Put off means to put it out of sight so you can never find it again. Then, be renewed in the spirit of your mind and put on the new man so you can live.

This is my provision to experience the abundant life: Forsake all of the thoughts of Adam; have mercy toward myself as I look unto the Father of all mercies; and partake of the divine nature, which is grace (2 Peter 1:4). Stand in that grace (Romans 5:2); manifest that grace as a good steward (1 Peter 4:10); and rejoice always in that grace because Jesus is grace (Philippians 4:4). Give thanks for everything and in everything (Ephesians 5:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:18) because of that grace; and then, be content in whatsoever state I am in (Philippians 4:11) because I am always looking unto Jesus.

Receive God’s grace and set it against your own concept of the law and Adam, which normally would have dominion. Let God’s grace settle the truth in your heart forever.

If you fail seven times in a day, you can receive forgiveness seven times in a day. Why? You are looking at mercy and not at self. Commune on your own bed, and “self” not! Day and night, meditate on Jesus Christ and all that He is (Joshua 1:8). Psalm 1:1-3 says that through med-

itation on the Word, you will prosper and have good success in whatever you do. You will bear much fruit because Christ always reproduces His life through His people.

There is no way for you to get out of sin, except through Jesus. There is no way for your emotional problem to change, except through Jesus. There is no way for secret sin to depart, except by confessing and repenting as you look unto Jesus in grace and love, having mercy on yourself.

Don't ever try to search your own heart. I'll tell you what your heart is like before you search it out: It is very wicked! But remember, you can confess and go home to the Father just as you are. He is not waiting to rebuke you. He is there, waiting, with a kiss, a robe, a ring, a fatted calf, and a lovely place to abide. You will not be a servant but a friend. Don't stay out in the far country, trying to give up your sin and analyzing why you did it.

"What makes me do this, Pastor?" It is your Adam nature.

The root of all our problems is in Adam. Do you want another answer? Do you want to play games out there in the center-field bleachers? The answer is Adam. "What do I do about it?"

See Christ. The trouble is that people don't love Jesus Christ enough to trust Him. Your problem is that you don't love Jesus—and now you are trying to analyze why you don't love Him. "But," you may ask, "what do I do about Adam?" The answer is Christ. "But it's too simple!" Yes. Now don't waste time.

### *Embrace the Promises*

The choice is either Adam and self-analysis or Christ and friendship with His promises. Embrace the promises, love them, court them. Kiss the promises. Walk with the promises. Fellowship with the promises. Sing, talk, and rave about the promises. Praise God for the promises. Worship, preach, glory, and go forward in the promises. You have Christ and the promises, and you'll be amazed at what He does as you mature in your experience. You could go ahead and live in your past, or you can get rid of it the easy way—with an easy yoke and a light burden. After you are delivered, you'll say, "I can't believe He did it!" But He did.

Don't you allow anybody or any situation to take your eyes off Him; just look right at Jesus, and don't flinch. The Bible says He is the way, the truth, and the life. If you try to enter in any

other way, you are a thief and a robber (John 10:1-5). When you go the way of self-analysis, you are a thief and a robber. You may be very wise at the Tree of Knowledge but very ignorant because you don't have God's life. According to the book of Ecclesiastes, earthly wisdom didn't get Solomon anywhere. Resting in God's life is the conclusion of the matter.

## CONCLUSION

Many people love to hear speakers who are very fluent and wise in the flesh. But the Bible says that in quietness and confidence is your strength (Isaiah 30:15). While some people are raving and doing a lot of talking—and they may even say something good in Adam because they talk so much—somebody else may be quiet and come up with the answer in just one sentence.

Did you ever wonder why, when you have tried to find someone to counsel you, no one was available? Maybe counseling would have been the worst thing for you at that time. Jesus Christ wants to teach you to lean on His everlasting arms, to be hid in the Body of Christ as a member in particular (1 Corinthians 12), to stand on your feet in Jesus, and to go forward. But, if, in the name of being a friend, someone tries to counsel you according to their own understanding, they are doing you an injustice. God won't even give the answer because He al-

ready is the answer.

Romans 5:12-21 gives the whole answer to self-analysis. In Adam all die, but in Christ all are made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22). In Adam, all became sinners; in Christ, all were made righteous. Sin reigned unto death; but, when you go to Calvary and accept the end of sin's reign through Christ's death on the Cross, then grace starts reigning unto eternal life by Jesus Christ forever—and that is where your analysis begins. It begins with grace, executed in eternal life, and you end up being occupied with Jesus Christ.