

Living in the Spirit

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 © 2002

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Chapter 1 7

THE BREATH OF GOD

Chapter 2 14

THE TRIUMPH OF THE SPIRIT

Chapter 3 21

TAKING UP CHRIST'S YOKE

CONCLUSION 27

INTRODUCTION

God created man in His image. As He is represented in the Trinity (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), God created Adam as a three-fold being (spirit, soul, and body).

The human spirit equips a man to communicate and have fellowship with God. But when Adam sinned, his spirit died. Ever since, all men are born into this world functioning as two-fold creatures—the body and soul without the human spirit.

Now, because of Calvary, the moment a man receives Jesus Christ as his Savior, his spirit is quickened and he is restored to God's original design. The saved man has a capacity to function fully as a three-fold being, having the necessary connection to God.

Sadly, many Christians, whose human spirits stand ready to operate and to direct them by the Word and the Spirit, function at two-fold capacity. This booklet is written to reveal how the

Spirit of God can communicate with the human spirit to bring victory and joy through the life of God.

Chapter One

THE BREATH OF GOD

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

“That the man of God may be [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

All Scripture is inspired. The Greek word for “inspiration” really means “God-breathed.” The Holy Spirit breathed into the human spirits of the writers of the various books of the Bible. God inspired them with His precise thoughts (Job 32:8), which the writers recorded.

God Almighty speaks to His people by the Word and the Spirit through the human spirit that has received the breath of life. All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

The Bible is full of examples of the breath of God in action. In John 20:21, Jesus Christ ap-

peared to His disciples after the Resurrection and said, "Peace be unto you." Then He breathed upon them, and they received the Holy Spirit. Ezekiel 37 speaks of a valley of dry bones. When the Holy Spirit breathes upon those bones, they will come alive. In 2 Thessalonians 2:8, the wicked one shall be consumed by the spirit, or the breath, of Christ's mouth.

The Three-Fold Man

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:26-27).

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul"

(Genesis 2:7).

Man was made in the image of God as a three-fold being. In the Trinity, the Father was the planner of creation; the Son, Jesus Christ, executed the plan of the Planner; and the Holy Spirit communicates the plan as He glorifies Christ.

God reached down and formed man out of the dust of the earth. Then, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, making him a living soul. Adam was first God-conscious in his human spirit under the three-fold image of God. In his soul he was world-conscious, and he became self-conscious after the Fall.

God, the Trinity, is three Persons in One. A man cannot get to know God—or even desire to know Him—until he lives as a three-fold being: spirit, soul, and body. The human spirit represents the only part of man that can ever know God, receive from God, respond to God, serve God, and love God. The soul contains the mentality, the conscience, the self-consciousness, the emotions, and the volition of a person. The body is the part that everyone sees.

God's design is that a man's body and soul be governed by the human spirit—that part of a man that is sensitive to and conscious of God.

But since all men have inherited a sin nature, the soul governs the body of an unsaved person or a carnal Christian. It takes the Holy Spirit of God to quicken the spirit of a man. If the human spirit remains dead, man is lost.

The Effect of the Fall

When Satan tempted Eve in the Garden, he enticed Eve to sin. Then Adam also took of the forbidden fruit and their human spirits died. Now the man and the woman functioned only in their body and soul as two-fold creatures without God-consciousness.

With the human spirit dead, Adam and Eve became self-conscious, aware of their nakedness before God and each other. God covered them by shedding the blood of an animal, and they were saved, but the human race as a whole inherited the curse of spiritual death.

That is the condition of every person born into this world: self-conscious of sin, of desire, of need; self-conscious in educating himself and trying to make himself better—but not saved. In this condition, not a single thing in man is God-conscious. He is fallen, and his human spirit is dead in trespasses and sin.

Fallen man always attempts to hide himself

because he is afraid. Fear plagues those who live in the temporal value system. Fears, lusts, phobias, withdrawals, depressions—the world has come up with a thousand excuses to hide from God.

As a two-fold creature, man is soulish. God is unable to fellowship with the natural man. Though he may prosper in the world's system, he cannot hear and obey the truth, so he lacks an eternal value system.

God often gives logistical grace to people who just want their portion in this lifetime. He lets them have their portion on earth because there will be nothing but hell for them in eternity.

Ecclesiastes 3:21 tells us that the spirit of a man goes upward. Matthew 10:28 says that we need not fear them who can only kill the body. Rather, we ought to fear the One who is able to destroy both the soul and body in hell. The Bible is clear that those who have never had their spirit quickened will end up in hell.

A body-and-soul creature may hear the Word of God, but he cannot receive it. There is no revelation for him. His body lives in the desires of the soul. He may appear to be "good." He might be self-righteous with very clean habits. It won't matter. None of that will save

him. He must accept Christ as his Savior, and God will quicken him together with Him (see Ephesians 2:5).

Quickening the Third Part

When the two-fold man hears the Gospel, the Holy Spirit can touch his soul with the Good News. When he sees the truth of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection from God's viewpoint, if he accepts God's provision of salvation by faith, the moment he believes, he becomes a new creature. He is born again, not of corruptible seed but of the incorruptible Word of God that lives and abides forever (1 Peter 1:23).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy [Spirit]" (Titus 3:5).

Now, the human spirit is made alive in this man. He has a spirit, soul, and body. He is made in the image of the Trinity with the Holy Spirit indwelling him. When he dies, his body, which will be resurrected later on (see 1 Corinthians 15), goes to the grave. But his spirit and soul go right up to heaven (2 Corinthians 5:8; Ecclesiastes 3:21). When Resurrection day comes, his Spirit-filled soul body will join up with a resur-

rected, glorified physical body to defeat the devil.

The Truth about Who We Are

“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (1 John 3:9).

This verse is often misconstrued. It doesn’t say that a man does not commit sin; it says that what is born of God cannot commit sin. The human spirit, which is born of God, cannot commit sin. A man is considered saved when his human spirit has been quickened by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. This means that his human spirit will never sin.

Will the soul commit sin? Yes. Does a man have to confess sin? Yes. He confesses to God alone and isolates the sin by putting it behind him, getting up, and going on with God. This is called the program of rebound. Once a person rebounds from sin, his fellowship with God is totally restored. The positional truth of the Bible declares that all Christians are complete in Christ, perfect in Him, and hid with Christ in God.

Chapter Two

THE TRIUMPH OF THE SPIRIT

To understand why people have so many problems and why we sometimes behave the way we do, it is crucial to discover what goes on in the invisible spirit world. Satan reduces our thinking to the relativity of the soul. The sad thing is that too many Christians will not stand in faith for what they believe. They will not fight back in the strength of the human spirit. They won't fight back with abundant life. They continually rationalize supernatural living by bringing it down to human levels in human viewpoint.

The spirit man always has dominion over the soulish man. The spirit-man is the head and not the tail (see Deuteronomy 28:13). The spirit-man is always the winner. He overcomes in the integrity of his application of the truth.

Two Emotions, Two Ways

"But there is a spirit in man: and the inspira-

tion of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8).

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4).

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jeremiah 17:10).

Man has a greater purpose than he ever could imagine. He was made a living soul, and in the last Adam—Jesus Christ—he became a quickened spirit (see 1 Corinthians 15:45). The spirit of man is the light or lamp of God, searching out the emotions, which reveal whether his resource is God or not.

Often, God uses "metonyms" in Scripture—words to represent a relevant concept that would otherwise be difficult to explain. Many of these words refer to body parts: the arm of God, the heart of a man, bowels of mercy, the head and not the tail, and so on. In Jeremiah 17:10, the word "reins" (the Hebrew word *kilyah* in the plural) is literally translated "kidneys," and it speaks of human emotions.

Just as we were designed to have two kidneys, God has given man more than one emo-

tion. The “left” emotion (for the sake of our analogy) represents the spiritual aspects; the “right” one represents the carnal. Our left emotion responds to our human spirit, reigning supreme and controlling the temporal value system; the right emotion responds to carnal initiations, reacting to what it wants.

If we function in the right emotion alone, we become spiritually short-circuited. This brings weariness, withdrawal, sarcasm, fears, phobias, and, in the worst cases, depression. The right emotion feeds off of human goodness to satisfy a self-righteous appetite. Simply put, the right emotion functions in the temporal value system.

A person functioning in the world’s temporal value system is filled with fears. All the phobias of hell are easily projected at him. Projections affect him because he is only conscious of himself and what the world has for him. His central nervous system and chemical processes in the brain are attacked. He is detached from his human spirit and detached from God’s living power. God’s abundant life cannot come through the soul. He may be a Christian who is operating as a two-fold creature, one who is coming up short of victory, power, joy, deliverance, and transformation.

The left emotion represents the spiritual capacity of the human spirit. Glory to God, the left emotion only responds to God and His Word. No one can function spiritually unless he is connected to God properly. Therefore, in faith we do not respond to the things which can be perceived by the right emotion, but to the godly things which cannot be seen. The things that are seen (possessions, people, lands, natural barriers) are part of the temporal value system; what is not seen (eternal security, love, heavenly citizenship, spirit-led prayer) is part of the eternal value system.

Moment by moment, I am either responding in my left emotion through the human spirit, or responding in my right emotion strictly according to the temporal value system. Under this temporal value system, I can make a good show in the flesh. But the natural soulish man, in his best estate, is but vanity, according to Psalm 39:5. All of man's righteousnesses are as filthy rags before God (see Isaiah 64:6). A person who is saved and functions in the human spirit controlled by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God has healthy emotions.

The Meekness of Wisdom

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

“This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

“For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

“And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (James 3:13-18).

“So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck” (Proverbs 3:22).

The key word in James 3:13 is “meekness.” It speaks of having a gentle spirit, not resisting God but receiving His Word and His dealings with us as good and for our benefit. The human soul has no capacity for meekness without God. Without Him, the human soul cannot be gentle

except in educational pretexts of habits. Without Him, the body will lust both in immorality and in carnal ambition. The body can be brilliant and successful, but it cannot function spiritually without God. When the human soul through the human spirit and the Holy Spirit is occupied with Christ, then the human body can refuse to be world conscious and function as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19).

I could get up and preach a message of knowledge without inspiration from the Spirit and it would be of no value. The Holy Spirit works only to reveal the truth to men and to glorify Christ—not Himself (see John 14:16-17; John 16:12-14; John 15:26).

In Genesis 1:26, “God *said*....” But in Genesis 2:7, “God *breathed*....” The Holy Spirit will not move outside of what God has said. The Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself; He only reveals what God has spoken and what Christ has done. The flesh profits nothing. The words God speaks are spirit and life. The words and the spirit are life together.

God breathed into the human spirit, and the human spirit came into the soul. A Christian under the inspiration of God makes an invisible God visible. He reveals an eternal value system

that goes forward in reckless abandonment to the Cross of Christ under the policy of grace in the motivation of love and energy of faith in the absolute dogmatic principles of the living Word of God.

When we listen to the Word of God, we must hear it with God's frame of reference—the human spirit. A person who receives and applies the Word in meekness of wisdom is functioning with a living spirit.

Wisdom that comes from above makes a person easy to be entreated. He is full of mercy and good fruit, and he shows no partiality or hypocrisy (James 3:17). This precious wisdom operates in the human spirit through the Word and the Spirit. It feeds the soul and makes it occupied with Christ. The body then is occupied with being a holy temple for the indwelling Christ and is not occupied with a hundred other things.

Today, we need men of God who study, exegete, and understand the premise of the Scriptures. We need preachers who preach more than just glorified Sunday School messages. We need men who will open their mouths to reveal the absolute, dogmatic, dynamic, wholesome, resurrection reality of man's eternal value before God.

Chapter Three

TAKING UP CHRIST'S YOKE

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

Look at the phrase “take my yoke upon you.” What was Jesus’ yoke? It was the Holy Spirit and God the Father. He was always yoked up to the Spirit and to the Father. He never took a breath without being yoked. He did not do anything of Himself. He would not speak unless the Father spoke. He wouldn’t work unless the Father did the work through Him.

When we take His yoke, we yoke up with the Holy Spirit just as He did during His days on earth. Then, meekness finds a place to live in our human spirit, the only place it can live.

“Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you” (2 Corinthians 10:1).

Meekness can only come through a person whose human spirit is filled with the Holy Spirit.

Once meekness controls a Christian’s human spirit, the soul doesn’t have to hide in fig leaves of the Garden with fears, phobias, and carnality. The moment meekness comes in, God-consciousness and Word-of-God-consciousness with wisdom from above take over. This brings in abundant life to the living soul, living emotions, a living will, a living mind, and a living joy. Then, gentleness will mark his soul as an outward expression of meekness.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

“Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23).

Every word of Scripture is so perfect. The first three fruits of the Spirit are inward: love, peace, and joy. The next three go outward, toward others: longsuffering, gentleness, and divine goodness. The last three—faithfulness, meekness, and temperance—are directed upward to God.

The Quick and Powerful Word

No one can hunger after God unless his human spirit is quickened. The Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. It divides the spirit from the soul, so anyone who has faith in the living God will have a living soul through a living spirit in a dynamic physical body that glorifies and manifests Christ as His eyes, hands, and feet (Ephesians 1:22-23).

“But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

“And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

“But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:40-42).

Martha was troubled about many things, particularly that Mary wasn't helping her at the moment. “Lord, don't you care that Mary isn't doing anything?” she was saying.

Mary was living in the human spirit at that time, drawing near to God; but Martha was not.

Without the human spirit, people are problem-centered, self-centered, fear-centered, and criticism-centered. They are, simply, centered in themselves. But when the Holy Spirit is controlling their human spirit, they are grace-centered, love-centered, forgiveness-centered, power-centered, Christ-centered. The whole thing is the spirit, soul, and body being preserved blameless until the appearing of Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

When the human spirit comes alive in a marriage, it makes the marriage unbelievably blessed. The husband just can't wait to love his wife with his body and soul. He can't wait to build her up. Her weaknesses do not matter to him. He ministers to her until she is filled with love. He is operating as a three-fold servant of God; his spirit, soul, and body are functioning under the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. He is so changed (Ephesians 5:23).

Years ago, a little boy came to me after church and told me that his father was beating his mother. Today, that father is a tremendous man of God in our church. He has been delivered from alcohol and has raised a solid, tremendous family. How did it happen? The human spirit began to operate in the husband, and

God's love started going out from him to his wife. He won the victory by drawing nigh to God, His Word, and His Church.

'Be It unto You'

Jesus Christ said, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29). Consider someone battling a terrible disease. The Word of God produces the life of Christ in the human spirit, faith takes over self-consciousness, and that life flows over to the body. The waters of the river of life become streams that flow into every part of an individual, strengthening him with God's power. Sometimes this power results in physical healing; that is always a possibility. But the Spirit-filled believer will be continually strengthened in the inner man. Then, he can glorify God according to *His* plan and *His* purpose with His provision, which may include suffering for the sake of others or because of the angelic warfare.

When the human spirit is filled with the Holy Spirit, the soul is occupied with Christ. The Word of God now guides the body and the soul (Psalm 119:133). The steps of a good man are ordered by the Word and the Spirit. He is always giving God's love and God's life, and he understands that it shall be given back to him—and

much more. That can mean money because of giving tithes and offerings, or it could apply to mercy, forgiveness, grace, and love. In the measure that I give these things, these things shall be given back to me.

If we give mercy, we get mercy back. If we give forgiveness to someone who doesn't deserve it, that forgiveness will be given back to us. This is the operation of the royal law of love (James 2:8). It is the perfect mature law of Finished Work liberty (James 1:25). When you give with God's heart, it shall be given back to you in good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

CONCLUSION

A Spirit-filled Christian is a serious threat for the devil, for his demons, and for the world's system. God's Spirit takes the believer from glory to glory, changing him along the way of faith. Though the world may hate us, the devil cannot touch us without God's permission. Even when we are hated, we return love for hate and go on with God.

Satan is a loser. Remind him of that every chance you get. Don't let him lie to you. Walk in the light of truth, knowing that he cannot bring up any accusation that will stand against us. Even in failure, we can rebound and go forward.

As many as are led by the Spirit of God shall flourish in His Kingdom. He will enable them to grow and prosper in the power and abundant life of Christ.

Perhaps your human spirit is dead just now. You need the Holy Spirit to come in and make it alive. Works of righteousness won't do it. It

takes God's operation of quickening. You need to accept Christ as your Savior.

You need to be born, not of the flesh, but born of God (John 1:13). Don't waste a moment. Ask Jesus Christ into your heart and get that human spirit turned on. Be saved today by grace through faith. Pray this prayer:

Dear Jesus, I believe what Your Holy Spirit has said about You. I want to know You and live in my full capacity—spirit, soul, and body. I want to have healthy emotions that can recognize You above everything else that fights for my attention. Thank You for shedding Your precious Blood on the Cross to save someone like me. Please come in to my heart and live. In Your name, Amen.