

*Love Is Satisfied by Mercy*

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 © 2005

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

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Introduction* . . . . . 5

*Chapter 1* . . . . . 7

*THE RICHNESS OF MERCY*

*Chapter 2* . . . . . 13

*THE DEGREES OF MORALITY*

*Chapter 3* . . . . . 18

*REAL SPIRITUALITY*

*CONCLUSION* . . . . . 21



## INTRODUCTION

Love is satisfied by mercy. Personally, I believe that this subject is not comprehended by many Christians, and, as a result, many are not operating in the effectiveness of God's power.

I have found that certain degrees of morality are often substituted for love and mercy. The bone of contention is morality that produces self-righteousness—and self-righteousness is the greatest blind spot today. This is one of the greatest problems that Christianity faces.

The Holy Spirit is grieved when love is not satisfied, and love is not satisfied when mercy is not appropriated. If there is someone whom you find it difficult to speak to, you have a grieved Spirit inside of you, and your love is not satisfied. You have love, and it is still everything it should be toward you, but it is not satisfied.

As this booklet will describe, true morality is derived from spiritual life. The intense love of Jesus Christ is satisfied toward us by God's

mercy, which is rich and wealthy and cannot be measured by situations, by details of life, by time, by people, or by counselors.

## *Chapter One*

# THE RICHNESS OF MERCY

“Among these we as well as you once lived and conducted ourselves in the passions of our flesh [our behavior governed by our corrupt and sensual nature], obeying the impulses of the flesh and the thoughts of the mind [our cravings dictated by our senses and our dark imaginings. We were then by nature children of [God’s] wrath and heirs of His indignation, like the rest of mankind.

“But God—so rich is He in His mercy! Because of and in order to satisfy the great and wonderful and intense love with which He loved us” (Ephesians 2:3-4, Amplified Bible translation).

The richness of God’s mercy satisfies the intensity of God’s love toward us. His mercy becomes the satisfaction of His love toward us, who were dead in trespasses and sin, who walked according to the course of this world, ac-

cording to the principalities and powers of the world (Ephesians 6:12).

Vibrations from the air can manipulate and control us when we allow them. Yet, mercy wipes out the effects of sin and satisfies love. Why does mercy satisfy love? It is because love pays for everything and then mercy comes into the scene to wipe out the past and to wipe out all the effects of the past. By this, you can see where mercy is necessary to satisfy love. Without mercy, love would not be satisfied toward us.

Please remember, love totally satisfies God because that is who He is. God is love, and nothing can be added to complement His love, because He is love. We are speaking in terms of anthropopathy (attributing human characteristics to God who is supernatural) when we say that in order for His love to be satisfied toward us, He has to give us mercy.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

“So love” was exemplified in Jesus Christ, who was given on the Cross, in our place, so we could have everlasting life by believing upon



Him. But despite what love did, we could not experience the meaning of love without mercy satisfying it toward us. When mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other (Psalm 85:10). Jesus Christ satisfied the demands of justice, holiness, and righteousness and the integrity of the Father's holiness. When this took place, then we could be accepted in the Beloved. Jesus Christ paid for our sins because God so loved us, and that brought in mercy to meet with the truth of His holiness and His perfect righteousness.

### *Forgive and Forget*

Here is the sadness of Christian churches today. Consider a ministry that preaches salvation by grace through faith. They preach beautifully that everything is executed by the grace of Almighty God. But here is a pastor whose mother died and after a period of time his father wanted to get married again—to a woman who had been divorced before she was saved. The father asked his son, the pastor, to perform the marriage and the son refused just because the woman had been divorced at one point in her life.

Love was not satisfied in this case because

there was no mercy. Doesn't that hit some of you right between the eyes? Be honest. You see, love is love, but love is not satisfied unless the richness of mercy is demonstrated in the effectiveness of grace.

What if somebody wounded and hurt me, and I remembered it for years? I might know how to be religious and to say it doesn't matter. I might know how to choose my words and to sincerely defend myself with my vocabulary, and I can say publicly, "That doesn't matter. Yes, they did do that. Yes, it did hurt, but it doesn't matter." But if it doesn't matter, how can I remember it? I'll tell you why I remember it: Because love has not yet been satisfied in me by mercy toward the person who hurt me.

### *Be Filled with the Spirit*

A lot of people are insecure, and when they are insecure, love is not satisfied because they have not received mercy. We are right in the middle of a revival, and most of you are happy. Others don't even know what happiness is. Why? Mercy isn't satisfying love in their lives.

It is a unique thing to satisfy God's love, a love that the Amplified Version of Ephesians 2 describes as "the great and wonderful and in-

tense love with which He loves us.” God is so rich in mercy that when we believe, in order to satisfy the great and wonderful and intense love with which He loves us, He has to quicken us from being spiritually dead (verse 5). He has to raise us up together with Him. He has to seat us together in union with Him, and then He has to give us the very life that was in the human body of Jesus Christ. This satisfies love.

When I am not filled with the Holy Spirit, love is not satisfied. Oh, love is still adequate, sovereign, and perfect, and it doesn’t need anything else to help it be love, but it is not satisfied until I accept its cleansing and its redemptive provision. I must accept the filling of the Holy Spirit and use rebound when I fail. I recognize my sin, confess it to God, isolate it, get up, and go on in the newness of life.

It is important to realize the two kinds of Christians we have today. We have the Christians who have accepted God’s love for their salvation. Then we have the Christians who satisfy the intense love of God with mercy rejoicing against judgment.

I think I have the answer for why a lot of counseling fails. It is because love isn’t satisfied. The one who is being counseled has not ac-

cepted mercy. He may have accepted the salvation of love, but he still hasn't accepted mercy that takes away all the effects of his sins and everybody else's sins. Therefore, love, intense as it is, is not satisfied. It is not satisfied because it is not being allowed to accomplish what it is by its very nature.

## *Chapter Two*

# THE DEGREES OF MORALITY

“Of this [Gospel] I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s free grace (undeserved favor), which was bestowed on me by the exercise—the working in all its effectiveness—of His power.

“To me, though I am the very least of all the saints (God’s consecrated people), this grace (favor, privilege) was granted and graciously entrusted: to proclaim to the Gentiles the unending (boundless, fathomless, incalculable and exhaustless) riches of Christ—wealth which no human being could have searched out” (Ephesians 3:7-8 Amplified Bible).

This passage needs to be understood for the working of the effectiveness of God’s power through the gift of God’s free grace. God is saying, “I want this grace to produce the working and effectiveness of My power.”

How is God’s grace going to be working in

the effectiveness of God's power? By receiving the satisfaction of His intense love that was given to us through mercy. It is unending. It is boundless. It is fathomless. You cannot calculate it. It is inexhaustible, and no human can search it out.

You come to me and say, "I don't think you handled that situation properly." You will never know, because you can't search out God's mercy. You don't know what it means to satisfy God's love. Therefore, you are speaking from human viewpoint, based upon your understanding of the degrees of morality.

### *Moral Light, Moderate Success*

One degree of morality comes from God-consciousness, which produces a moral light inside of man through the justice of God. "This is the light that lighteth every man" (John 1:9); that is, God-consciousness (Romans 1:18-22). There is a morality that comes from the moral light springing out of God-consciousness.

This morality is a system of doing right but, in this case, without the Holy Spirit. Any unbeliever can exercise himself in the deepest form of this kind of morality.

The good part of it is that it helps a marriage

if you are not saved. It tremendously contributes to a family, it contributes to a community, and it blesses a nation in the government of cities and states, because it protects our freedoms of person and property and our rights to exercise our free volition and to transact business in a free enterprise system.

This degree of morality, however, never does save a person.

I think that this degree of morality, again and again, has been substituted for spirituality. It doesn't take the Holy Spirit for a person to be moral. My mother was as moral as a person could be, and she didn't believe in Christ until she was 68 years old.

### *Self-Righteousness and Comparison*

Another degree of morality is a morality that produces self-righteousness. There was one point in our ministry when I can remember so much of this morality of self-righteousness hanging around. These self-righteous conspirators flattered one another and elevated one another's value, and it was all done to run us down. It was a confession of morality that was self-righteous.

Then there is a degree of morality that con-

stantly produces relative morality. This is the morality of comparing ourselves among ourselves, and the Bible says this is never wise (2 Corinthians 10:12).

“I don’t cuss, you do. You’re not moral.”

“You drink a little beer. I don’t. You’re not moral.”

“I work hard, and you don’t work as hard as I do.”

“I tithe, and you don’t.”

That is relative morality. It is different than relative righteousness.

One lets his kids dress immodestly, and he defends it. The other one doesn’t do that, but he has a secret affair going on. Now tell me, who is the moral one here?

This kind of morality goes around and around. It plagues countless local assemblies. These brands of morality represent how the majority of Christians enter into tremendous problems. Why? People mix sincerity in with it, so it becomes very difficult to define and very easy to deny there is a problem because we are so sincere.

Sincerity as we think of it deals with a personality trait, but it does not necessarily relate to a person’s character. When we were born, we



were not created equal. Our genetics were different, and we were not created equal. Therefore, some of us were born with a personality that expresses sincerity, which has absolutely nothing to do with our character. Furthermore, a person can be very sincere about what they believe and yet be sincerely wrong.

The only thing we can do is to receive from heaven the very character and nature of Christ, which we derive through the indwelling Holy Spirit and the sincere milk of the Word (1 Peter 2:2).

*Chapter Three*

## REAL SPIRITUALITY

The most beautiful and the best degree of morality is morality derived from the grace of God. What is morality that derives itself from the grace of God? It is a morality by which we honor Jesus Christ and walk in the filling of the Spirit. We love God with all our heart, mind, and strength. We don't put people under any relative morality or relative righteousness.

If you fail, you don't deny it—you judge it upon Calvary, and repent. Because of Calvary, you enter into a spiritual life that honors a godly, moral understanding of how to treat others.

I would call it spirituality that produces godly morality. That means I do not judge other people, but I forgive them as Christ forgives them.

This godly morality extends mercy that satisfies the intensity of God's love toward us. No human being can search out the depth of it. No

human being will ever be able to discover the power of it. That is what Ephesians 3:7 in the Amplified translation of the Bible says, "...the working in all its effectiveness—of His power."

This godly morality, which derives itself from a spiritual life, has tremendous power—the power to completely do away with what I have done.

That takes power. That takes more than words. That is the working of the effectiveness of His power, with the satisfaction of love, by giving mercy toward the subjects who need it. This is the power that keeps a man from sinning in the same area all the time, even though he may have been committed to that sin for quite a while. Finally, he finds the power to give him victory over that sin—godly morality that derives itself from spiritual life.

### *Unsearchable Riches*

Now we have the unsearchable riches of God's grace. They are called "unsearchable," and they are called "riches." This is the wealth that is provided through God's love. And the wealth provided by God's love is the mercy toward us that satisfies the working of the power of God's love.

This is what it means: Forgiveness is complete. There is no memory of sin or sins. Patience is inexhaustible. God's love is unfathomable. His mercy is incomprehensible. His grace is inexhaustible. Therefore, when we counsel one another, we try to search out where this applies and where it does not apply.

When do you exhaust it because of discipline? When do you exhaust it because of justice? When do you exhaust it because of the way people are treating you? The answer to that is, you can't; and therefore, you don't exhaust it.

Am I saying that there isn't a common place for tough love? Of course, there is. But tough love is still making all of this available in its completeness, while it requires a person to choose to operate in its effectiveness. If a person will not operate in the power of its effectiveness, it is for them, but it is not in them; therefore, it cannot be a functioning process of satisfying love because the mercy has not been received within them.

Still, love isn't taken away from that person. There has to be tough love toward him, always with the hope and desire of knowing that love can be satisfied by mercy and the power working effectively in us, which comes from spiritual life.

## CONCLUSION

A person who doesn't understand how the intense love of Christ toward us is satisfied through the wealth of mercy is a person who will always end up with irrational emotions. When you enter into an irrational emotional complex, you do a lot of crying instead of believing. You do a lot of negative thinking instead of positively trusting Christ. You try to draw out for yourself a concerned listener who understands your irrational emotional complex. This complex derives itself and it is established through relative morality that produces self-righteousness.

Understanding these truths gives us the answers for why our emotions, our temperament, and our disposition come under the control of our old sin nature, while we justify it with one degree of morality or another.

So, I think you can see with me the value of understanding the satisfaction of God's love to-

ward us, which is to draw toward us and to receive in us the riches and wealth of His mercy. That alone takes care of the workings of the effectiveness of His power.

It takes power not to sin. It takes power to forgive. It takes power to love the unlovely. It takes power to believe for somebody who shows no evidence of doing right. It takes the power of patience, the power of faith, the power of prayer, the power of praise toward God, the power of worship, and the power of the Scriptures working specifically in us and through us.

God doesn't want the effectiveness of His power paralyzed or crippled inside of us through the grieving or quenching of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19). He wants His power to be liberated to represent the satisfaction of His love, which is to have mercy toward others, revealing our spiritual status, in maturity and stability.