

Living an Anointed Life

Carl H. Stevens Jr. is pastor of Greater Grace Church 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 © 1999

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 5

Chapter 1 7

THE POWER OF GODLINESS

Chapter 2 13

*THE IMPORTANCE OF MANIFESTING THE
ANOINTING*

Chapter 3 19

ANOINTING AND THE GIFT OF REPENTANCE

Chapter 4 24

RECEIVE GOD'S GIFTS

CONCLUSION 30

INTRODUCTION

Very sincere Christians can find themselves doing very wrong things, even though they are trying to do good. They are born again, washed in the blood of Christ, but when they would do good, evil is present with them (Romans 7:20). Things they should not do, they do, as Paul wrote in Romans 7. Something is lacking from their lives: They lack an anointing.

An anointing will see a Christian through anything he might face. We have received “an unction from the Holy One” (1 John 2:20). *Every* born-again believer has an unction, or ‘anointing’, not just selected individuals. The anointing we have received abides in us.

We were sealed with the Holy Spirit when we first believed (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). We were regenerated by that same Spirit (Titus 3:5), and He came to dwell in our bodies. This is true of every blood-bought believer. This booklet will show that to experience the fullness of Christ’s

life, His anointing needs to be manifested in everything we do. Allow the Holy Spirit to show the anointing of Christ that is within us.

Chapter One

THE POWER OF GODLINESS

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy [Spirit].

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were

added unto them about three thousand souls.

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

“And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

“And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

“And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

“Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:36-47).

The Power of Pentecost

The second chapter of Acts describes one of the most powerful events that ever occurred on the planet. It was called “the day of Pentecost,” when the Holy Spirit first took up residence in born-again believers, filling them with power. Acts 2:14 says, “...Peter, standing up with the eleven...,” which means that all the apostles stood in one accord. They were united because

they were anointed by the Holy Spirit of God.

Before Pentecost, Peter and the other disciples did everything in their power to be spiritual, but they were not. Certainly, they walked and talked with the Lord Jesus Christ on earth and witnessed many miracles. They saw how He fed the four thousand and the five thousand (not counting women and children) with just a few loaves and fishes. They were there when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:40-44) and saw Him beautifully raise the dead son of the widow from Nain (Luke 7:14). They also watched Him raise a twelve-year-old girl from the dead (Luke 8:49-56). They saw Him heal the sick of leprosy, fever, and all manner of diseases, sending many home in amazement at His power.

Seeing all of this, the apostles so wanted to please Him. But they could not because they did not have an anointing. Peter really meant it when he told Jesus that he wanted to follow Him anywhere. But Jesus said, “One day you will follow Me, but you can’t do it now Peter—in fact, before the night is over you will deny me three times” (see John 13:36-38). In other words, He said, “You can’t follow Me now. You haven’t had your Cross experience. You haven’t had a

resurrection experience in the Holy Spirit yet. Oh, you *want* to follow Me, but you cannot.” However, after Calvary and Pentecost, Peter would follow Christ.

The disciples *wanted* to follow Jesus, but they just could not do it. They didn’t want to forsake Him when He was being crucified, but they did. Only John came back to the foot of the cross. Peter did not want to curse, or swear, or deny Christ—but he did.

In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit descended, and everything changed. The Jews were seeking a sign, so God gave them a gift of tongues—a supernatural expression of national languages. (Christ also had given many other signs.) Prior to this, the disciples had a form of godliness, but they denied the power thereof (2 Timothy 3:5). They had a *form* of godliness, but they had very little faith.

Discern and Manifest the Anointing

God said of David, “with my holy oil have I anointed him” (Psalm 89:20). David understood something that is a great mystery to many believers, about the position and call of other servants in God’s Kingdom. King Saul had murder in his heart. Filled with jealousy, pride, and ar-

rogance, he wanted to kill David and tried to kill him.

Having had his life in danger by Saul, David had many opportunities to kill the king, yet he would not do it. David understood that Saul's anointing came from God too, and he said, "I will not stretch forth my hand to touch God's anointed" (see 1 Samuel 24:10-12; 1 Samuel 26:9-25).

How could Saul have been anointed to be king over Israel and yet desire to murder someone? Because, the prophet Samuel (as a representative of God) anointed him with oil to be a godly king over Israel. Saul, however, did not manifest his anointing.

Thank God for those believers who manifest their anointing—it is one of the greatest things the world can see. Every Christian is anointed for as long as he lives, but the anointing needs to be manifested.

Be Sensitive to the Anointing

Many people are gifted speakers, but to communicate the heart of God requires something more. Knowledge and academia will not set people free, but a godly speaker will manifest the anointing through God.

Also, the members of the congregation need to have an anointing to hear properly (Exodus 29:20). They need to recognize the vital role they play in the anointing of a church service. An anointing is very sensitive to distractions. Therefore, when people get up and move around during an anointed message, faith fields and degrees of faith that could bring miracles break down.

Every Christian must learn how to execute the anointing in his personal and private life as a believer-priest before God. Many would be healed if they learned how to operate in their anointing, and many would experience total victory by learning to manifest their anointing.

In John 20:22, Jesus breathed upon the disciples in recognition of their office, but they still did not have the power to fulfill their apostleship. The change came in Acts 2, when the Spirit of God filled the disciples. Right away they manifested an anointing they never had before. Souls were being saved, disciples were being made, and men everywhere were hearing the Gospel of grace.

Chapter Two

THE IMPORTANCE OF MANIFESTING THE ANOINTING

“For this purpose the Son of Man was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).

“For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh” (2 Corinthians 4:11).

One of the saddest things is when people we know and love are not able to manifest God’s anointing. They are good people who have followed God for years. Perhaps they have been backsliding, but no matter what their sins are, like Saul, they have an anointing. They are just not able to manifest it. Others may be serving God, yet their anointing is not manifested. But what a difference to go out and serve God in the manifestation of God’s Spirit!

The life of Christ has to be manifested

through the Holy Spirit. When it is not, there are so many problems in marriages, and many Christians fall into lust patterns. We need to recognize that the manifestation of the anointing through the Holy Spirit brings freedom.

“It shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing” (Isaiah 10:27). The anointing removes the yoke of jealousy, the yoke of envy, the yoke of insecurity, the yoke of lust, and the yoke of pride.

A New Identity

When the anointing of God is being manifested in a believer’s life, his fallen personality dies, though he still has individuality. Jesus Christ did everything that the Father told him to do. He could do nothing of Himself (John 5:19, 30). He spoke when the Father told Him to speak, and He did the Father’s works through abiding in the Father (John 14:10-11). Referring to believers, Jesus also told the disciples, “greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12). Jesus Christ was anointed of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38), and every Christian can live

in the manifestation of His anointing.

A believer will manifest an anointing when he has gone through the Cross and on to identification with Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering. By this, he is made conformable to Christ's death (Philippians 3:10). Through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, by meekness and humility, the Christian identifies with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection—not just on certain days but all the time, using rebound after moments of failure.

As a pastor, when I prepare a message I must enter into an anointing for that message. If I'm going to preach on hell, I think of the people who are suffering there today. I will consider them and, thus, by the time I reach the pulpit, I can hardly say a word without weeping.

Paul wept day and night for three years (Acts 20:31). Jeremiah was called the weeping prophet. Many words in the Greek text convey the idea that Jesus wept often, more times than we read in the Scriptures. Jesus wept as He looked down from a mountain onto Jerusalem. Why? In the Spirit, He could see that Jerusalem once again would be taken into captivity, this time by the Romans (which did occur in A.D. 70). He wanted to save the people from that, but

they would not be saved. For this reason, He wept.

Why did He weep and groan in the Spirit after Lazarus had died (John 11)? He wept because so many people did not trust Him, and they did not believe Him. Mary and Martha—His dear friends—didn't trust Him. They trusted that He would resurrect Lazarus in the future, but they didn't believe Him for that to happen there and then. All those around were crying. And Jesus wept. With His tears He was saying, "Why can't they believe Me?"

The Varieties of Anointings

When a person is under an anointing, there is diversity in his communication. If he is a pastor, his preaching should not sound the same every time. If he is a soul winner, his approach should not be the same every time. In Isaiah 58:1, the Lord said, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet...." But in Isaiah 42:1-2, He was very quiet—sometimes even silent. His voice could hardly be heard on the street.

During His life on earth, Jesus manifested many different anointings. In Matthew 23, He had an anointing of righteous indignation against the sins of the Pharisees. Then, in John

8:7-11, He expressed a tender anointing toward the woman taken in adultery. Identifying with her against her accusers, He was very tender. He had an anointing for teaching and an anointing to preach. Each one was different.

Just as our moods differ (in a good way), so do God's moods differ. God knows the heart (1 Samuel 16:7), and His moods differ in relation to the capacities of people He is dealing with. Every yoke that is not of God can be destroyed by the anointing. Therefore, we ought to sincerely pray for one another for an anointing that breaks the yoke.

The Meek Shall He Teach

Psalm 40:6 says, "Sacrifice and burnt offerings thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required." Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). In Leviticus 14, to cleanse the leper, the first thing the priest anointed with oil was the right ear. This is because before a man could be anointed for service or for his walk (represented by anointing the thumb and the toe), he needed to be anointed to listen, so he could hear from God.

Likewise, the believer starts to experience

his anointing by being anointed when he listens. That happens by the fruit of the Spirit called meekness (Galatians 5:22-23; Psalm 25:9). Meekness guarantees a Christian's anointing. It means to be God-conscious, Christ-conscious, Cross-conscious, and Resurrection-conscious.

What a difference meekness makes! Meekness takes away Adam's personality and brings Christ's personality (which was the Father's personality) into the believer's individuality. Every person is different and has individuality, but no one has to live in his fallen personality. It is so important for every believer to understand this. When the Holy Spirit takes over, we definitely retain individuality, but now we are Spirit-controlled, Spirit-led, Word-of-God-anointed individuals.

Chapter Three

ANOINTING AND THE GIFT OF REPENTANCE

When Peter spoke at Pentecost, he had an anointing of boldness and preaching. “You killed the Lord,” he told the crowd there in Jerusalem. He explained how Jesus was promised to them through David and came to them through the house of David. After their hearts were convicted, Peter skillfully brought people to a point of decision:

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter saith unto them, Repent [every one of you], and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy

[Spirit]" (Acts 2:36-38).

Gripped by his anointed speech, the Jewish people asked what they could do to be saved. Peter's answer, "Repent, every one of you," is a very significant phrase in the original Greek text. It is a second-person plural in the aorist tense and imperative mood, marked by a radical break, or pause, before "be baptized." (*Repent* is in the active mood—the subject produces the action. *Be baptized* is passive—the subject receives the action without doing or producing the action himself.)

In other words, Peter said, "I command you to repent, and you will be saved." *After* that, he instructed them to "be baptized every one of you." This time, he spoke in the third person singular aorist imperative. The radical break indicates separate actions. Proper exegesis of this verse reveals that *repentance* brings salvation; it did not have to be connected with baptism. Rather, baptism is something we do *after* salvation. Do you see how important it is to rightly divide the Word of Truth?

Change of Mind, Change of Heart

Imagine what might happen if all Christians understood the real meaning of repentance.

Metanoeo, translated “repent” in Acts 2:38 means to have a change of mind and change of heart that comes by being available to God and to receive His gift.

“[Jesus Christ] hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, *for to give repentance to Israel*, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). This verse makes it clear that repentance is a gift. Also, Romans 11:29 says that “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” What does that mean? Only God can change me! Only God can change any of us. That is why John 1:13 says salvation is “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

We need to understand what Jeremiah understood: “Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God” (Jeremiah 31:18). This weeping prophet understood repentance, for he went on to write “Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed” (Jeremiah 31:19). The anointing of repentance turns a man. The anointing removes the yoke of drugs, and it removes the yoke of lust.

I got a letter from a young man who had been delivered from homosexuality. “If people

only knew the change that comes to a man's life when he is delivered from that sin," he wrote. "It was a sick, horrible, ugly lifestyle, but only God could turn me from it." God turned this man as he kept drawing near.

He drew near. He came to every service, took every opportunity to hear the Word, and read everything he could get his hands on that would draw him to Christ. He drew near and God turned him. After he was turned, his mind was changed toward God's viewpoint. Then, he began to receive instruction on how to live. That is how repentance works.

God Does the Turning

"Turn us, O God of our salvation," David wrote in Psalm 85:4.

There's a big difference between what this message is telling you and what some others would tell you. Some preach that a worldwide revival will come when people repent, and then they tell you that repentance means that you change your mind. The Bible says that *you* cannot repent! The Bible says that God will give you a gift to draw near. And if you keep drawing near, God will give a gift of the Holy Spirit's anointing that will break any yoke and take

away any burden from your shoulder: "...And the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing" (Isaiah 10:27).

Please understand, *there is hope for everyone*. Some people come to church, get deliverance from drugs, and then fall back. I happen to believe that they will be totally delivered one day. Many of them are already able to stay clean longer than ever, and some have been totally delivered.

I know of a couple with a great testimony. Both of them were drug addicts, and he spent time in jail. Ministered to by people on an outreach in our city, one of them prayed for salvation but resisted conviction from the Word of God. So, both of them ended up in a very low place. But at last, they looked to God and He turned them.

They drew near, and they received the gift of repentance. It was a gift, and that gift destroyed the yoke. Do you understand what happened? They received the gift of repentance from the Holy Spirit. Now, they come to every church service. They continue to draw near.

Chapter Four

RECEIVE GOD'S GIFTS

Salvation is a gift. The Holy Spirit is a gift. Repentance is a gift. All we have to do is receive the gift and use it. When we have faith toward our Lord Jesus, we bring forth fruit because we believed. We believed in the gift of repentance, and we brought forth fruit (Acts 20:21; 26:20). What's more, the gifts and calling of God are *without* repentance.

Luke 13:3-5 says, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," but in reading this we must keep in mind *the principle of first precept*. If something in Scripture seems to be a contradiction, go back and always accept the first precept.

Genesis 3:21 offers the first precept on repentance. Adam and Eve did no works to be saved. God killed an animal; there was a shedding of blood. God removed their fig leaves, took the skins of the animal, and clothed them. It was God's gift. Lamentations 3:21-26 tells us that

repentance is a gift. Psalms 25 and 51 speak of repentance as a gift, and Jeremiah tells us repentance is a gift. Therefore, if repentance is a gift, *God* can do it. I simply let God change my mind.

In Matthew 27:3, after Judas betrayed the Lord, "...when he saw that he was condemned, *repented* himself...." The word for "repented" here is *metamellomai* in the Greek, and it implies regret. Judas wept, he cried, but he did not let God change his mind. He had a worldly sorrow for what he had done, but he did not receive the gift of repentance from God to be changed.

Esau, according to Hebrews 12, sought a place for *metanoeo*, which is God's gift of true repentance from the heart and mind (and the emotions follow). But Esau could not find it, because he had *metamellomai*: He was very sorry—but it was a worldly sorrow. He was sorry, but he never received the gift that would change him.

As we mentioned before, Acts 2:38 (where Peter commanded the people to repent) must also line up with the first precept for repentance, which is that repentance is a gift from God.

Anointed for Power

I don't care what your yoke is or how long you have been under it. The Word of God says

the anointing will destroy the yoke. Believe it! And be careful to be filled with the Spirit every morning, noon, and night. Young people, high schoolers, college students—any believer can be anointed with a manifestation from God. Let your heart and your soul be filled with the fresh oil of God.

“But my *horn* shalt thou exalt...I shall be anointed with fresh oil” (Psalm 92:10); that is, my power has been raised up, and God will anoint me with fresh oil. “Horn” speaks of power. David was anointed three times with oil, representing the fact that he had to be empowered for everything he would do.

We need an anointing for the work of the Lord. We need an anointing to pray and to win souls. We need an anointing to be faithful to God’s house. We *need* an anointing, and it is a gift. We don’t earn it. We don’t have to merit it. God loves us, and He has paid for all of our sins. Salvation, just like everything from God, is a gift. Come and receive the gift!

If you are still carrying that burden, believe God for His deliverance. You will be delivered! Just draw near, and God will give you the gift of deliverance. Ask God for the manifestation of His anointing every morning. When you are

tempted, get on your knees, fall before God and say, “God, give me the gift of your anointing. I don’t want to go back to that sin.”

Receive Precise Thoughts

When you start hearing categories of doctrine, you are receiving precise thoughts that are transferred by the Holy Spirit into the memory center of your mind, now, because you are thinking precisely with the Word of God. These categories enter into your frame of reference to be used by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26) as they are needed. This is a gift from God.

Thank God that in our flesh dwells no good thing (Romans 7:18)! The flesh profits nothing (John 6:63). It is the anointing that breaks the yoke and brings the filling of the Holy Spirit. After this comes love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and temperance—the fruit of a Spirit-filled life. Then we live in divine guidance with the Spirit (Romans 8:14-16), and doctrinal guidance by the Word (Psalm 119:133; 37:23). It is divine because God takes over, and we cooperate. It is no longer us, but Christ who lives in us.

For those who were saved on the day of Pentecost, they were baptized by water *after* they re-

pented. Baptism never saved anyone, but it is a command. It is an expression of retroactive positional truth—of our death, burial, and resurrection in Christ, which is a testimony before God. Three thousand were baptized the day they were saved, a testimony before the angels.

No one should wait for something else to happen before they become baptized. If you have received the gift of repentance, you are gloriously saved: God has forgiven you, and you have the gift of the Spirit. So now, get baptized after you understand thoroughly what it means in positional truth. Don't put it off.

Anointed to Give and to Share

In Acts 2:41, after the people were saved they gladly received the Word. They repented through being turned by God. Then they were baptized, and they gathered every day to hear the Word. Verse 45 says they “sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men, as every man had need.”

So often this verse is misunderstood, but a careful study shows what it means. Those who had more than they needed were anointed to help those in need. They brought their gifts to the church, where everything was distributed.

The motivation was love, not religion. They took what they had extra and didn't need and gave it to those who didn't have anything. They were anointed to give. They had an anointing to share because of love. And that anointing broke the yoke of greed.

When we are anointed, our gifts from God knit us together in the Body of Christ, and the world knows who we are by our love.

CONCLUSION

God gives anointings for all kinds of things. Some are anointed to sing and to play instruments. There are anointings to pray, to love, to forgive, and to be patient. God gives an anointing to be pure, to be made clean one moment at a time (Isaiah 27:3), and to glorify Christ one day at a time.

After you have read this, please just close your eyes and think of God's great gifts. This is how anointings truly work. There is not a single thing that can happen in our lives except by having a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Keep in mind that we need to have more than knowledge of these things. There must be a trust from the heart. Once you have confessed every known sin, accept the fact that those sins were paid for once and for all. Isolate them from yourself forever. Even if you have done something again and again, simply isolate it, forget it, and move on.

Pray, “*Dear Lord, I receive the filling of the Holy Spirit as a gift of grace.*” When you were saved, you received the Spirit. Now receive the Spirit’s filling to motivate, energize, and teach you. Receive your anointing, which breaks your yoke, and manifest the life of Christ that is in you through the anointing of the Holy Spirit.