

*One Mind, One Heart,
One 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.

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Greater Grace World Outreach, Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Chapter 1 7

MEMBERS IN PARTICULAR OF ONE BODY

Chapter 2 11

SPEAKING THE SAME THINGS

Chapter 3 15

THE SPIRIT IS THE KEY

CONCLUSION 19

INTRODUCTION

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

“And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

“I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me” (John 17:20-23).

Oh, how God longs for oneness among His people! In reading this passage in the Gospel of John, I am always overwhelmed by the appeal of Jesus for His disciples to be one, just as He and the Father are one. Four times in this brief passage the Lord prays that those whom the

Father had given Him may be one.

Therein we see the key to oneness. It is something that must come from above. Anything manufactured by man is destined to be defeated by the enemy. Among many church denominations today is a movement toward oneness that is built on concepts derived from a natural viewpoint. It is the concept of the world. Compromise rules the day, as many believers are taught to relate to each other on a human level.

As this booklet will show, oneness in the Body of Christ comes from above, through Jesus Christ, who is the head of the Body. By the moving of the Holy Spirit, Christians can be unified in mind, in heart, and in spirit—godly oneness that produces real results throughout churches, communities, countries, and continents.

Chapter One

MEMBERS IN PARTICULAR
OF ONE BODY

Consider carefully the apostle Paul's great communication on oneness in the Body of Christ:

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

"For the body is not one member, but many.

"If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

"And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where

were the smelling?

“But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

“And if they were all one member, where were the body?

“But now are they many members, yet but one body.

“And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

“Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

“And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

“For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

“That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1Corinthians 12:12-27).

We, as Christians, are members of the royal family of God. This relationship goes beyond friendship. It goes beyond subjective love. When one member suffers, all suffer with that member; when one member rejoices, all members rejoice with him. We laugh with those who laugh. We weep with those who weep. We are members one of another in the Body of Christ.

This passage in 1 Corinthians 12 is so beautiful because this kind of oneness is a great manifestation of revival. It is the work of the Holy Spirit producing and promoting an unction that flows to every member in particular. A pastor who sees this happening in his church is very happy, I can tell you. He realizes that he has something special going because of God’s intervention in the lives of ordinary people.

Revived in Oneness

“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

“Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits” (Romans12:15-16).

One woman came to me and said, “I have to see you.” She told me that her husband has cancer. The news came very suddenly. Tears came to her eyes, and in an instant, I was weeping with her. I wept with her because of compassion and concern. The tears revealed the oneness we have together as members in particular, over and above the unexpected news she had to tell me.

This woman made a statement, and then the Word and the Spirit revived us in a very serious moment. We were very concerned, and we entered into prayer. On my way home in the car, more tears came, and I said to God, “Please, God, don’t let this dear man die.”

I weep with those who weep, with tears of compassion. I rejoice with those who rejoice. Please remember that I am speaking for every one of us. We are one in Christ, and we have experienced this oneness over the years in serving God together. This goes for every one who has been knit together in the Body of Christ and has experienced the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit—one body, many members, all to give glory to God.

Chapter Two

SPEAKING THE SAME THINGS

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

I love this passage. “Beseech” is a very important word in 1 Corinthians 1:10. When I see this word in the Scripture, it means that God is exhorting us to put truth into action. “I beseech you...” means I am urging you with a special urgency to go from theology to application. We are to go from just knowing something to obeying it.

Paul was writing to this troubled church in Corinth, and he was saying to the people there, “You have the theology that I taught you, now let’s see the application of it. Let’s cross over the bridge from knowledge to experience.”

I am so very thankful for all those with me who co-labor in love. There are times when I am so busy with the tasks that I have to handle, and the phone will ring. It is a dear friend calling to say, "I miss you. I haven't called you for such a long time."

Or, I will be in a business meeting and my secretary will interrupt to say that a certain person is on the line. "Wow, they still remember me! That is good," I will be thinking.

Seriously, I appreciate so much every call that I get. Every beautiful letter or edifying e-mail that comes to me is so precious to me. I enjoy the absolutely fantastic, loving relationships that God develops in the Body of Christ.

Be of the Same Mind

"By the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" is such a great phrase. Years ago, I fell in love with that name. I have always loved that name, but I am just now beginning to understand its real meaning. Those who love this name are those who speak the same things. There are no divisions with them. They have the same mind—the mind of Christ.

We have to be very careful when working with those who do not have the same mind. I

am not saying that there cannot be diversity. Some of my dearest friends do not attend my church. They love me, and they are led by God a certain way. We have times when we get together for coffee and just express our love and appreciation for each other.

Now, if I were to make demands and say, "If you love me, you'll come to my church," it would just be a matter of control and negative thinking. But I think it is so beautiful when the differences are just a matter of diversity. There is no scriptural dispute and no sin between. We just come to an agreement that we are different, and that is okay.

So many things go on out there. Pastors and church leaders are hurt when they have ministered in love and labored in the Word and in prayer, and those they have loved go against them. These are the things that really hurt a true pastor.

What is the problem? They are dealing with people who are not of the same mind.

There is more to it than just having the same mind. Colossians 2:2 tells us to have the same judgment and to be perfectly joined together in love. We have had that in our community for the past several years. I can honestly say that we

have been deeply loved by the people here, and it has been marvelous.

People have prayed. They have prayed tirelessly and fervently. They have walked with me in love and in compassion, serving our Lord together. God has given us His heart, and we have been made one in His body, therefore we speak the same things.

Chapter Three

THE SPIRIT IS THE KEY

“And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:

“And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them” (Jeremiah 32:38-39).

We have received wonderful official honors for our work in the city of Baltimore. One group recently named us the “Church of the Year.” Another organization has put us in its Hall of Fame. These are great things to celebrate, because we also have had our share of persecutions and attacks.

Now, you will not hear me get up into the pulpit and rattle off all of our accomplishments. I don’t get on the radio and ramble on and on about how we have received this honor and that honor, this award and that award. But, very honestly, some of these things are really amaz-

ing honors for God to give us. I want to be honest and tell you that I am absolutely undeserving of any of it. Still, they are much appreciated. I don't want to boast except in the Lord, in what He has done through me by grace together with you in the unity of Christ.

I don't think our enemies talk about these awards when they get together, do you? But one day, God will have something to say about their attacks against our ministry. Let me just say that I am deeply grateful to overcome the enemy while we enjoy the oneness and love of being in Baltimore, having great people and great ministries supporting us.

Recently we honored a wonderful pastor from the local community. He flew in from California just to accept a special presentation from our body. "Just come on up, receive your honor, and go home to rest," I told him. "I know what traveling can do to a body."

"You are not getting rid of me like that," he said back to me. "You are not going to chase me away right now. We are one with you and I want my people to see this and revel in our togetherness."

I was so blessed by his statements. This is a man with a congregation of 3,500 people.

Many of our pastors have experienced these same things in their communities. These are unusual days for us because God is doing mighty things. There is a great oneness where we weep with those who weep, laugh with those who laugh, rejoice with those who rejoice.

Have you ever gone to church and just felt like laughing the whole time? I have had those moments. Usually it happens in the times when the pressure is the greatest, and if I didn't laugh, I would probably cry. I am sure people are thinking, "What is *that* all about?" but so often, God uses laughter just to shake off the dust of the atmosphere that is trying to get to us.

Great Grace upon Them All

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy [Spirit], and they spake the word of God with boldness.

"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and

great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:31-33).

In this specific group, men were filled with the Holy Spirit. Here is the key to having one mind and one spirit. Even if some of them did not have the same gifts that the others had, they still had the same Spirit because they were in the same place for the same purpose.

This is a beautiful thing.

Even if some people lack the doctrine that others have, they still have the same Spirit with what they do know. This means so much to me. In Christ, we have the same Spirit.

This kind of quickening among us is the evidence of revival. This is what causes souls to be saved. This is what makes people feel free.

CONCLUSION

Oneness from God revels in the diversity of the Body of Christ. We are members in particular, and our unity is made stronger as each one lives in his call from the Lord and makes himself available to supply his unique portion in serving Christ in unity.

This oneness and unity is never based upon the “uniform”—that is, a sameness and a similarity developed through emotional rapport and soulish attachments. That which is uniform can appear to have unity, but it lacks the power and presence of the Holy Spirit that draws strength from every member.

As we grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, my prayer is that all believers will learn to continually consider the truth expressed in Ephesians 4:

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

“In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

“In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22).