

Rebound and Rejoice

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 © 2004

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Introduction</i>	5
<i>Chapter 1</i>	7
<i>JESUS PAID IT ALL</i>	
<i>Chapter 2</i>	14
<i>STAYING IN THE RACE</i>	
<i>Chapter 3</i>	18
<i>GIVE UP, GET UP, AND GO ON</i>	
<i>Chapter 4</i>	24
<i>WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE</i>	
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	28

INTRODUCTION

There are two things that God desires. First, He desires that every person be saved. Secondly, He desires us to be content with what He has provided in life. That contentment springs out of a heart filled with joy. Philippians 4:4 says, “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.” The only way a believer can always rejoice is by understanding God’s desire: “that your joy may be full” (1 John 1:4).

In John 15:11, Jesus was saying, “I have spoken these things to you so that *My* joy might remain in you, so that *your* joy might be full.” Have joy in everything you do. Not only is that the object of a life of faith-rest through the work that was finished on our behalf at Calvary, but it is also the object of rebound in the life of a believer. By rebounding—by getting up and coming back when you fall down—your joy will be full.

Imagine it! The object of Jesus Christ dying

on the Cross was to take miserable, wretched people like us and bring joy to our hearts by saving our souls. People who want to satisfy the need of their own souls may use escapism through various means, such as taking pleasure in drinking alcohol. Drinking alcohol is wrong, but it is also wrong when believers go against God's Word simply by being anxious. No matter what we may go through, God's desire is to bring joy to each heart.

In this booklet, I hope that you see the practical aspects of the principle of rebound. Many people think they have rebounded when they really have not. They may be doing everything right, but they are fearful of failing again. As you go through these pages, my prayer is that you will come to understand that the purpose of rebound is always that your joy may be full.

Chapter One
JESUS PAID IT ALL

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

“(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

“And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the

truth:

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

“If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:1-10).

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

“And he is the propitiation [(or Mercy Seat, which means the same thing)] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 John 2:2-4).

Notice how God addresses us in a transla-

tion of 1 John 2: “My little, small children—you are so little, so small in your thinking, so small in your hope and vision, so small in your aspirations, so small in your desires. You are *little* children.” He said that these things were written so that we would not sin. But John also wrote that if any man *does* sin, we have an advocate with the Father in Jesus Christ, the righteous one. Jesus died so that not only the Church but the whole world might have the opportunity to receive Him as their Savior.

I once knew a woman who had no joy or happiness. She was sickly and she lacked motivation. She didn’t want to be around anyone, and all she wanted to do was sleep. She wasn’t reactionary toward any particular thing, but she just felt that everything was going badly for her. It got to the point where she didn’t care if she were alive or dead. She finally went to the doctor, and after a thorough examination and some lab work, he told her that she was anemic. He prescribed medicine to help build up her blood and encouraged her to have nutritionally balanced meals, to get plenty of fresh air, and to have proper rest. As she began to follow the doctor’s advice, she also began to feel better, and she started to make right decisions with the

Word of God. Her physical health began to rebound. Her blood tests showed that her blood count was up and her health had actually improved. Soon, everything began to add up and shape up, and everything was all right.

“I can’t believe the difference!” she said, “I enjoy everything now. Everything makes sense. I’m beginning to live again. I actually enjoy cooking for my family. I enjoy being with my children. I enjoy eating, talking, listening—I enjoy everything. And everything is all right.”

The Bible says that the life of the flesh is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11). No wonder! Just getting her blood right made a tremendous difference for that woman. She also got her life right with God, and it made a difference.

Living with Divine Purpose

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.

“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep” (1 Corinthians 11:28-30).

Every once in awhile I look myself over as I

am, and I consider what I used to be before I was saved, when I was outside of the will of God. I don't like to dwell on it. It is the peril of the victorious life to dwell on it. But once in a great while, I look myself over, and I think of what a wretched, no-good, miserable, blind individual I was! I thought I had the world by the collar, but all the time the devil had me by the neck. I thought I was going on the right path, but all the time the devil had me on the broad road of destruction. I thought everything was adding up, but all the while I was being subtracted from what God would want me to be through His Spirit. Everything was going poorly. There was no happiness, no real joy in my pursuits. But when I became convicted of my condition and received Jesus Christ as my Savior, that was when He became my reason to rebound and to rejoice.

Put the Past Away and Turn to Jesus

I was reading an article about a group of young people who had become rebellious and were involved with a motorcycle gang. They would go to a family recreation area every summer and cause havoc. When a policeman asked one of them why they did it, he said "Well, I

guess you're going to tell me that we don't have any purpose for living." He was saying, "We eat, drink, and are merry, for tomorrow we may die" (Luke 12:19-20).

Psychiatrists and psychologists are ever working, trying to get man's past out of his system, trying to get him to see something he did at the age of ten, the age of twelve, and the age of twenty. The analysis is an attempt to bring things out into the open and thus find a cure. He may respond for a time, but it will not last. Sooner or later he will fall right back in the same problems. Why? Analysis is not the ultimate answer.

Think of the great hymns and the songs about the power of the Gospel and the precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Consider all that God has done for people down through the ages and what He is doing today. *He* is the Answer.

When I think of what the Lord Jesus Christ can do, has done, and will do, all I can do is rejoice. Consider how He gives us joy, how He makes us rejoice. He has given us the Spirit of God, meaning in life, purpose in living, and a spring in our step!

When I think of what the precious Blood means, it warms my heart. I get as much joy out

of knowing that today as I ever did. In fact, He is more precious, more beautiful, and more wonderful than ever. I am a child of the King! I am not going to live as an impoverished individual, restrained by the devil and in bondage to sin. I am a child of Jesus Christ. I have been cleansed.

Because of what Jesus Christ accomplished for us on Calvary, we are free. We can have joy that is full, joy that is complete. Everything can add up. We can have a faith that rests in the Finished Work. Everything is going to be all right.

Chapter Two

STAYING IN THE RACE

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

In order to run this race, you have to be a Christian. You must be born-again. You need to be saved. You need to be an individual who has decided to go God’s way. With your own free will, you have to choose Jesus Christ. You have to *choose* the Word of God. You need to choose God’s way, God’s commandments, God’s standards, God’s Spirit, and God’s purposes for your life. That is the first thing. Repent of your

sins and accept Jesus by faith. It is all by grace. That is the first thing. Then, once you are a Christian, Jesus says, "I will start the race with you. I will run with you in the race. And when you get over that long road, I'll be at the finish line, waiting for you."

That is the way the Lord Jesus Christ thinks about you. It's a good race when *He* is helping you, when He gives you the energy. Look unto Jesus! We are compassed about—surrounded—with so great a cloud of witnesses. We have Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Enoch, Rahab the harlot, all the men of God—every believer down through the ages is included in the cloud of witnesses, in the grandstand of Hebrews 11.

Abraham's Story

I could ask Abraham what he thinks about running the race with God.

"Abraham, what do you think about the race?"

"Well, God told me to leave Ur of the Chaldees, but He didn't tell me where I was going. He just said to leave. That's all. So I left.

"I made a few mistakes along the way. I got halfway there and I stopped. Finally my father died. God had told me not to take him with me,

but I did what seemed right in my own eyes. After my father died, everything was all right. I was in Canaan.

“When I got down to Canaan, there was a famine. God was testing my faith. I had left Ur of the Chaldees, the Gentile nation, to go with God by faith to a new land. But once I got there, God wanted to test me to show me what I was going to do with my faith in Him.

“So down into Egypt I went, and I made a mess of things. I lied twice, and I got into all kinds of trouble. But every time, God helped me to rebound. God got me out of it. It was a shaky race, but it was a lot of fun.”

One last thing Abraham would say is this, “Don’t look unto me. I made a few mistakes. I looked unto other people, but finally I got my eyes on the Master. Finally, I finished my course. Now, everything is all right.”

Jacob Wrestled with God

Jacob would make another good interview.

“Jacob, what do you think about it? You’re in the grandstand in heaven. You are one of the heroes of faith, according to Hebrews 11. What do you think about it?”

Jacob would probably tell it this way:

“I guess I gave the Lord a lot of trouble. They called me crooked for a reason—I did crooked things! I cheated my brother out of his birthright by deception. Then my father-in-law cheated me, but I got even. I cheated him too. I made a lot of other mistakes.

“But one night, the Word of God came unto me, and the Lord wrestled with me (see Genesis 32). He put my thigh out of joint, and I was lame ever after. Every time I limped I would think, Oh, how God wrestled with me! God has allowed trials and testings and temptations. He has let troubles into my life to get me to where I am now.

“Listen, my thigh still hurts. But I remember that night. All night long, I wrestled and Jesus put my thigh out of joint. Still, I would not let Him go. I told Him, ‘I won’t let You go until You bless me.’ I kept holding on to God and He blessed me. That is the way it works with faith. You fight the good fight of faith and wrestle with God. Every single time, God will bless you.”

God wants to bless us. This is the thing God wants to do with mankind. God has never wanted to do anything but bring joy to the heart of man. All God has ever wanted to do is to bless the hearts of men.

Chapter Three

GIVE UP, GET UP, AND GO ON

Many people fall down and fail. Some get so discouraged and they fall so much, they can hardly go on. It is just as if they cannot go on anymore. That is what it seems like. They are so sick of falling down. They know what the Bible teaches. They know what the Word of God says, but they are so tired of trying that they give up, and then they go down again.

In Luke 17:4, in His tremendous lesson to the disciples, God said, "Don't forgive just once. Forgive seven times in a day if a person repents." In Matthew 18:22, "Seven times seventy," says the Lord Jesus on the subject of how much forgiveness we are to give others. God says in 1 John 1:9, "If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive you."

David's Confession

Can you picture David in all of his sin? First,

he committed adultery with Bathsheba. Then he arranged the death of Uriah, her husband. And then he lied. Here was David, in trouble and confused. Did David go to the nearest psychiatrist? No, he did not. Did he get excited and take tranquilizers? Well, maybe he felt like it, but I don't believe he did. (I don't think they had them back then.) Did he go out and buy some liquor? I don't read that he did, but it wasn't beyond David. He had the capacity to do it just like you have that capacity, even if you have never done it.

Finally, David's sin was exposed and he cried out to God. Psalm 51 contains the details of that time when he poured out his heart in that confession:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

"For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when

thou judgest.

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

“Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

“Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

“Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

“Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

“Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.”

“Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

“O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise” (Psalm 51:1-12, 14-15).

Oh, what terrible depths of sin David went into. But thank God! Once he sought the Lord and poured out his heart to Him, David was

able to rebound and then to rejoice. If modern psychiatrists and psychologists would only show people that this is the answer for the convicted, corrupted conscience of mankind. This is the answer for a man who was so nervous.

Living in the Right Answer

This is the answer for the person who gets angry and moody at his job. He gets cross and he curses. He swears out loud. He hollers at his family. He has that habit as a sedative. He always needs to have something outside of Jesus. That is his answer.

The cleansing Blood of Jesus, confession, and rebound is the answer for the believer. It is a life of faith, full of rest, that is able to rebound. David said, "Everything is all right." He wrote some tremendous psalms after his situations. He said, "When I go down in the depths of sin, I don't understand how God puts up with me. I have hurt Him, and lied, and cheated, and lived in sin. Still He shows me His mercies!"

In Acts 13:22, David was called a man after God's own heart from the beginning (Psalm 89). He said, "After I was down in the depths of sin, in a moment of time, Almighty God in all of His lovingkindness cleansed me." David had a clean

mind, a cleansed conscience, and a purged heart, and everything was all right with David. He understood what it meant to rebound, and he rebounded God's way.

The Word of God teaches about the prodigal son, in Luke 15. In a critical moment he said, "I'm going home to my father." He realized that he needed to rebound, and he went home humbled. He repented and rebounded, and God forgave him.

John 21:15-21 describes how Jesus restored Peter publicly and gave him a public ministry. Peter had denied Him and cursed Him (Matthew 26:73). But finally Jesus said, "It's perfectly all right, Peter. Feed My sheep. Feed My lambs. Feed My sheep." He said, "Go and preach the Gospel—right now! Start preaching *now*."

Peter came back through the process of rebound, and God made him a preacher within ten days after he had sinned so great a sin. Oh, God is wonderful! God's mercies are bountiful. He has abundant mercy, and He is so good. When a person wills to sin as Peter did, as David did, and as Abraham did, God says, "I will help you. But don't go to tranquilizers. Don't go to booze. Don't get into sinful habits.

Just confess your sin, get up, and go on." God is saying, "You don't need sedatives. All you need is Jesus. Confess it. Apply the Blood. Believe Me, I will cleanse you inside and outside. Everything is going to be all right."

Chapter Four

WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE

Perhaps, you are way off the dock. Maybe the beautiful songs don't touch you. Maybe you are cold to the Scriptures and the fabulous application of the Word ministered in faith-rest. Perhaps the concept of rebounding and rejoicing don't touch your soul. Maybe you are just not tuned in. Perhaps there is no fire burning. You just don't seem to have the fire. You don't seem to have the life. You don't seem to have the fruit. You are not hungry and thirsty after righteousness. You find it easy to miss services. You find it easy to get out of the will of God. You find it easy to go the wrong way.

I want to encourage you. I want to tell you that you can rebound. You can come back with a rebound. You can come back and be determined to accept the Blood and its applications, and you can rebound. God does not want us to sin, and His gift of grace doesn't give us a license to con-

tinue in sin. If we do sin deliberately, willfully, we will not get away with it. But He also promised that if we confess our sin to Him, He is our provision.

“If any man does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

We have a lawyer standing in the presence of God for us. I can see Him there now, and the devil is there doing his part as the accuser of the brethren in the presence of God (Job 1:6). The devil says, “Listen, that person isn’t living a very good life.”

But Jesus says, “I am the Attorney, Father. I want to plead for that person.”

And the Father says to the Son, “What is Your defense? That person is doing exactly what the devil says he is doing. You are his Advocate. You are the Attorney. You are the Lawyer. What is Your defense for that man who accepted You? Now he is sinning. What is Your defense?”

Then I can see Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as He puts out His hands, and He says, “These nail prints—these represent My defense. I shed My blood for him. My defense is the Blood! The Blood has cleansed that man of all sin (Titus 2:14).”

“You are a very good Lawyer,” the Father says. “You are a skillful Attorney. You are a powerful Advocate. I have already agreed to accept that Blood as a payment. It is all right. He can go free.”

Let Jesus Keep Your Feet Clean

“Wash me all over,” Peter said to Jesus as He washed the disciples’ feet (John 13:8-9). Jesus said, “No, I’m not going to wash you all over, just your feet.” He said, “You are clean everywhere, but you will need to have your feet washed again and again. You will fall, but I want you to rebound, so let Me wash your feet.”

We can rebound. We can get right so that we can enjoy the fellowship with God and with one another, to feel cleansed, to be pure, to be hungry and thirsty after the Word, and to enjoy Christian life with a heart that is full of joy.

The only reason people do not have a song on their lips and the fire is not burning in their bosom is that they have not rebounded. They do not name their sin. They do not confess their sin. Again and again, they follow the same patterns of fleshly, worldly, carnal life with no ability, no power, no determination.

But all they have to do is to rebound.

Is this where you are? Why don't you really rebound and say, "God, I don't know what is wrong. I am not living in sin, but I am just indifferent to those things. I am not happy. I do not have joy. I do not have it. Lord, I want to rebound."

Let the Blood of Jesus Christ be everything it wants to be. Let it cleanse you completely. You have an Advocate. You can be cleansed in a moment. Don't try to "feel" your way out of it. Just walk by faith and rebound by confession and start over again. You can rebound in a moment of time. God's salvation is perfect. His ways are perfect (Psalm 18:30). Just rebound, and walk on as one who is full of joy.

CONCLUSION

There is nothing like the Christian life when you get the true perspective on it. Jesus is so wonderful and so precious and so close. He is always dealing with us with wisdom, talking and witnessing to the spirit and the soul.

Every time I pray, the fellowship seems to be sweeter. The songs seem to be better. The preaching is so powerful. The services, my relationship to Him, and the fellowship that I have in Him just get better and better.

God is so good. God is so wonderful with every Christian. Many can say that as they grow in grace. Many can say, "That's right! That is just what I'm experiencing." I wish that everybody would, and I hope you will too. Why don't you rebound the revival way? Call any sin you fall into by its name. Confess it. Repent of it. Isolate it and go on. By faith, get right with God. Rebound and just let Jesus take you by the hand and uphold you with His free spirit (Psalm

51:12). We all need freedom in our lives. We need to be able to shout with rejoicing, "Amen and hallelujah!" Praise the Lord, for all that He has done.