

*Beyond Knowledge,
Into Wisdom*

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 © 2000

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Chapter 1 7

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMANDMENTS

Chapter 2 10

LOVE IS THE ISSUE

Chapter 3 14

THE SUPERIORITY OF WISDOM

Chapter 4 18

WISDOM IN APPLICATION

CONCLUSION 23

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever read the Bible or listened to a message from the pulpit and noticed that it did not seem to touch you? Maybe you were sincere and you liked it, but it did not seem personal. Whenever your response to God's Word becomes dull, you can stir up your heart by applying the Word to your personal situations and to problems that cannot be solved by human effort. Meditate on how God's Word can meet the needs of family and friends. It will solve any problem in the world when applied in wisdom.

With all of the knowledge available to people, wisdom is lacking. Too often, knowledge is used to manipulate and control people and situations, but this is not what God intended. In heaven's economy, knowledge must submit to wisdom and is expressed in divine love.

This booklet will show that wisdom is the Word of God expressed through the heart of God. By wisdom, we can walk circumspectly in

the love of God, manifesting his grace and mercy in every situation.

Chapter One

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMANDMENTS

“And hereby do we know him, if we keep his commandments” (1 John 2:3).

Commandments, mandates, laws, and rules are very important.

The Word of God says that we know that we know Him, and go right on knowing Him, if we keep His commandments. “Do we know him” is a tendential present indicating action that is commencing but not completed. When commandments are mentioned, many people think of legalism and the letter of the law—everything negative. But Jesus said, “A new commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you.” Then He said that all the law is summed in one word—“love” (Galatians 5:13, 14), and He explained by saying, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.”

The Law Is Fulfilled

When you think of commandments think of this: Jesus fulfilled the law (Matthew 5:17). He was the end of the law of righteousness (Romans 10:4). What do these things mean? They mean that the law of the spirit of life has overcome the law of sin and death. It is not just a law. The principle is the spirit of life. The Holy Spirit sheds love abroad in our hearts (Romans 5:5), and we walk in love as His dear children (Ephesians 5:2).

The commandment Jesus is talking about is a Finished Work commandment. He is saying to us, "I finished making a way for you; I am available to you. I am faithful to call you, and I will do what you desire according to my word as you execute your faculties to make choices to believe and obey the truth in your own soul (1 Thessalonians 5:24)."

He is saying, "If you will let Me, I will perform what I asked you to do" (Job 23:14).

His commandment is that we would walk in divine love, and that commandment is not grievous (1 John 5:3). That means it does not cause sorrow. It is not difficult because God does it.

Now imagine if we didn't have any rules, or laws, or so-called commandments in our cities, in our schools. What if we didn't have any rules about school starting at a certain time? Perhaps we don't call them commandments, but that is what they are.

Thank God that even the Ten Commandments are a document of protection. The Commandments are the basis for the divine establishment and protection of personal freedom, marriage, family, the Church, and national entity. Thank God that the Bible says, "Do not bear false witness; do not steal; do not commit adultery" and so on. The Commandments of God protect our person, our property, and our rights. The Commandments do not save us, but they are beautiful in the plan of God.

Chapter Two

LOVE IS THE ISSUE

In this beautiful principle of commandments, Jesus is telling us, "If you really, truly, objectively love Me, not only will you have subjective love toward everyone, but you will have objective love. Because My character is revealed through you, I can exchange My love with you and through you." Objective love means that when two or more people are filled with the Holy Spirit, they have fellowship with each other in the light (1 John 1:7).

God has both objective love and subjective love for believers. However, only God can have subjective love for the unsaved people of the world. Based upon Himself as the subject, His love goes toward people who are not saved, but He cannot have fellowship with them, even though He died for their sins.

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another" (Romans 13:8a). That is a commandment.

Be kind, tenderhearted, and forgive one another as God has forgiven you, supernaturally through the Spirit of God (Ephesians 4:32). That is a commandment.

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). That is a commandment—the Great Commission.

Draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having your conscience delivered from evil, and your bodies washed with pure water, holding fast to your profession of faith. Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together as is the manner of some (Hebrews 10:22, 23, 25). Be a good steward of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10). Be a faithful steward (1 Corinthians 4:2). All these are commandments, but they are not difficult.

“Keep thyself pure” (1 Timothy 5:23). That is a mandate. And all mandates are given under the New Covenant in the New Testament Age, where we have the privilege of being part of the royal family of God. All these commandments are given to bless us, to protect us, to provide for us, and to reveal God through us.

Now, because of this, we can begin to understand that God’s commandments, which are not grievous, are all based upon the motivation of

God's love. And, when our motive is divine love, we are filled with the Holy Spirit of the living God.

The Importance of Repentance

"[God] commandeth all men everywhere to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by [Jesus Christ]" (Acts 17:30b-31a).

Repentance is a commandment, yet few Christians understand what it is. As a result, few ever truly repent. Many believers know they need to change their ways, and they vow to do it, but their mind and their will are never changed.

Repentance is a gift from God for the believer. David said, "Turn me, O God" (Psalm 85:4). Jeremiah said, "Turn me, and I will be turned...and then I will be instructed....Surely after that I was turned, I repented" (see Jeremiah 31:18-19). They realized that it is not by the will of man nor the will of the flesh, but repentance is of God. Those who are lost must first believe and receive Christ as their Savior so they can be born again. Once a person is saved, he can repent and let God change his mind about what he is doing (Acts 2:38).

Repentance is a very precious thing. When things are not right in our lives, one of the greatest privileges in the world is to hear the Word, agree with God quickly, and repent.

Judas never repented. He said he was sorry that he made bad decisions, but he didn't truly repent for betraying Jesus Christ. In the end, he killed himself, and he went "to his own place," apart from God (see Acts 1:25).

Chapter Three

THE SUPERIORITY OF WISDOM

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

“But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him” (1 John 2:4-5).

What does it really mean to know God and to keep His commandments through His love and through the New Covenant? The motive, the source, the origin of keeping His Word is the love of God perfected in us. We know we are in Him because we have the fruit of keeping His commandments.

There is one thing that I am seeking at my age, and that is wisdom. All of us need it. The one thing that is so crucial in knowing God is wisdom.

I can't begin to tell you about how many men I have met who are very gifted. They are

very bright, and very smart—people love to hear them talk, love their sharpness, but their wisdom is lagging way behind their gift. They are applauded because of their gift, but they lack sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. This lack of wisdom can cause much heartache.

In brokenness, earnestness, and with fervent conviction, after nearly fifty years of preaching, the thing that I see lacking more than anything else is wisdom.

What Leaders Really Need

When I pray for a Bible college student, a young pastor, or anyone showing leadership qualities, I pray for God to lead them to wisdom. More than testing potential pastors on theology, doctrine, hermeneutics, or apologetics—things that are certainly very important—what we need to do before ordaining anyone is to study their lives to see if they are ready to pastor with wisdom.

As a young pastor, I learned the value of prayer and asking for wisdom. I would go to God and pray every day. I said, “Whatever You give me, I will preach. I study hard; I am obedient to your mandates; but I don’t have wisdom. Please give me wisdom.”

True Stability

“And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure” (Isaiah 33:6).

In an exegesis of the Hebrew text of this verse, we find the word *chokmah* for “wisdom,” then a conjunctive particle followed by a feminine noun. “Knowledge” is *daath* and comes after the conjunction, making knowledge subordinate to wisdom. When the conjunction attaches a fresh subject to an already complete clause, the idea thus attached is subordinate to the principle subject. Knowledge must be subordinate to wisdom. Otherwise, “knowledge puffeth up” (1 Corinthians 8:1) and “the letter killeth” (2 Corinthians 3:6).

I have seen young men who would go around quoting Scripture, yet, they did not demonstrate wisdom. They had knowledge, but no wisdom. Sadly, they are no longer following God.

Please remember this: Knowledge is subordinate to wisdom because wisdom is the living Word, Jesus Christ who is manifested by the written Word of God with the Holy Spirit ap-

plying the knowledge of the letter. Knowledge must submit to wisdom. When this is understood, then wisdom shall be the stability of our times, bringing a godly fear or reverence for the Lord.

Knowledge submits to wisdom when it comes to studying and rightly dividing the Word of God. Wisdom is loving your congregation, investing in people. It is praying behind the scenes for those who are going through very difficult times. This is wisdom because it is applying the truth of what you know from God's Word and doing it by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter Four

WISDOM IN APPLICATION

"That no flesh should glory in his presence.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,

"That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:29-31).

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and will all thy getting get understanding" (Proverbs 4:7).

A family came to my office about a disagreement with a teacher. Their conversation became heated, and I thought, "What would wisdom do?" Wisdom would be very gentle, very kind, and listen. Especially, knowing that not one of them had a capacity for truth because each one wanted me to take their side, I said, "Can we get on our knees and pray? I will get back with you in a few days, and I will do whatever I can do."

We got on our knees. I made them feel very loved.

Another time, a man came into my office and I let him attack me for fifty-eight minutes. I never opened my mouth during those fifty-eight minutes. When he was through, I said, quietly, "Sir, I have to be honest with you. If you were right, I would weep and ask for forgiveness. But can I be honest? I have listened to you—I haven't interrupted you one time in one hour. What you are saying is not true."

I embraced him, and he put his head on my shoulder. I told him, "I will consider everything you have said, and I love you deeply."

That man had quit the church, but he was back the next Wednesday night. I knew that this man had gone out on his wife. I knew many things about him, but during our meeting I did not bring up any of them because he was so angry.

Two years later, I heard this man say something beautiful about that session. "I have got to say this: Pastor surprised me, he was so kind," he said. By using wisdom, God was able to turn away the man's wrath.

Minister from the Heart

“The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned” (Isaiah 50:4).

Jesus Christ did not speak out of season to the weary. If there is one thing we need, it is wisdom so that we do not try to control people. If you are a leader and someone comes to you who is wrong, don't react. Remember, a soft answer turns away wrath.

Within three days, I called that family who had the problem with the teacher. After investigating the matter, I told them, “I have to stand with our teacher. I can't agree with you. I hope you will understand.”

They did understand, and everything is fine between us.

If a pastor tries to control his congregation, he will be doing damage control all the time. Always remember that people stand or fall before God alone. We cannot dictate to them. We must not run them down. You can preach what you will from the pulpit in love, but you cannot and you must not try to control people. Control is

nothing more than manipulation. We must not use the precious Word of God to manipulate others.

Get Past Manipulation

When I first started out as a Christian, I was manipulated. A pastor preached for forty minutes that we weren't supposed to have television, and everyone knew that I was the only one there who had one. After a forty-minute message against TV, how do you think I felt? At the time, I was a new believer. I had only been saved for three months.

As I was going out the door of the church, the pastor said to me, "You know, you can still repent." Now I felt even worse! What he didn't know was that a man I worked for went bankrupt and owed me money. He felt bad about it, so he gave me his Spartan console-TV, radio, and phonograph, all in one. I came home one night and he had installed it and put up an antenna.

That preacher didn't use wisdom. He didn't know that I never bought that TV. He should have come to me alone and asked me about it.

We must understand that wisdom is more than using knowledge. Wisdom is being filled

with love; it is walking in love but not compromising the truth about love. Wisdom is applying knowledge. This beautiful principal means exactly this: To know God is to be filled with wisdom.

CONCLUSION

Jeremiah 4:21 says that many die without wisdom. Psalm 90:12 encourages us to apply our hearts unto wisdom. Another good one is Isaiah 47:10, "Wisdom plus knowledge is perverted." This verse refers to those who have gifts, real gifts from God. They are sharp, tremendous in the use of their gifts, and available to use them, but their wisdom is way behind their gifts. Their gifts may cause people to be drawn to their natural abilities instead of benefiting others in the Kingdom. Sooner or later, their knowledge becomes perverted because the Holy Spirit is not operating in it.

Ecclesiastes 7:12 tells us that wisdom is a defense. Proverbs 8:33 tells us that wisdom calls us to hear instruction. It says, "Don't refuse these instructions." A man speaks out of his mouth wisdom (Psalm 37:30). If a person is to be wise, Proverbs 19:20 says he must receive counsel from the Word of God. That is very important.

The Bible says that God established the world by wisdom (Jeremiah 10:12). Only God gives wisdom (1 Chronicles 22:12), and the commandment of God makes us wise (Psalm 119:98).

Father, thank You for giving us your wisdom to operate in. Keep us tenderhearted and kind, not puffed up with knowledge but growing every day to be more like You. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

God Really Cares For You

Jesus loves you deeply. However, the fact that all have sinned separates us from God (*Romans 3:23; 6:23*). Still, God cares for you and He provides a way to share His love with you.

Jesus Christ's love for man was so great that He came and died on the cross for all the sins of mankind. He shed His blood for you so you can be forgiven and have eternal life.

The only thing He requires of you is to come to Him in simple faith trusting His character and love for you, and accepting Him as your Savior. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (*Acts 2:21*) .

Simply pray, "*Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I receive you as my personal Savior. Thank you for loving me so much that you died for me so I can have eternal life with you. Amen.*"

He promises that He will never stop loving you and that He will never leave nor forsake you (*Hebrews 13:5*). Develop your relationship with Him by reading the Bible, praying, and attending a good Bible-believing church.

Call or write for more information: (410) 483-3700

Greater Grace World Outreach

P.O. Box 18715

Baltimore, MD 21206

Visit our Web Site: www.ggwo.org

Other Booklets by Pastor Stevens

Just Let God Love You
The Power of an Active Faith
His Strength is in the Clouds
How Does God Measure Your Life?
The Cross: A Burden or a Blessing?
The Price of the Gospel
Communion within the Church
Are You Spirit-Taught?
Fishing for Men
The Bema Seat: Presented in Joy or Grief?
Insecurity
The Great Cover-Up
The Hearing Heart
Leaving Your Island for a Brand New Garden
Others
Rest on Every Side
God's Greatest Gift: The Lamb
The Power of Weakness
Choices
Esteeming God's Presence
The Impact of the Unborn
How to Stay Fervent
Shout "Grace, Grace!" to the Mountain
Highway of Holiness
How God Ordains Our Footsteps
Salvation: Profession or Possession?
Beyond Morals into Divine Light
Living in Grace Reversals
We've Got a Message
Satan Meant it for Evil, But Is It?
Motivated by God's Provision
Uncontrolled Knowledge
A Life of Faith Action
Lifting Up a Personal Cross
Dead and Buried
Taking Care of Your Soul
Eternal Life Victory
Living in God's Tree of Life
Dancing on the Dust of Your Tomb
Atmospheric Cycles
Divine Humility and Meekness
Severing Attachments to Evil
Coverings
Teenagers: Answers for Life
Nevertheless, Thy Will Be Done
Having a Heavenly Vision
Dealing with Stressful Times
How to Avoid the Pitfalls of Immaturity
Don't Fight Back: Trust God!
What is the Mystery of Marriage?
Finding God in Your Darkness
From Chains to Freedom through God's Anointing
Living an Inspired Life from the Breath of God
God Speaking to Us What a Miracle!
Do I Really Know How to Pray?
Can Anyone Overpower the Power of Demons?
My Yoke Is Easy My Burden Is Light
He Is the God of the Valley

Comforted by the Voice of God
Embraced by the Anointing of Love
Having the Mind of Christ
The Weeping Savior
Praise Him in this Place
Meeting God in Grace
His Lovingkindness toward You
Walking in Faith
Categorical Meditation: The One Answer to All Problems
The War Against the Mind
The Great Detective: Sin
Freely Receive from God
Standing Firm in Godly Convictions
An Eternal Destiny
Having an Identity of Love
Defining the Call of God
The Great White Throne Judgment
The Morning Star Order
Operating in the Authority of God's Kingdom
A Victorious Self-Image in Virtue Love
Table of Grace
Failure is Not Final
Marriage: A Personal Investment
Intimacy in Prayer
Be Still and Know that I Am God
The Finished Work of Christ
Committed to Purity
Why God Hides Himself
Having God's Heart for the Lost
Who is on the Lord's Side?
Imaginations of the Heart
Dealing Precisely with Demons
Exposing Satan's Armies
A Judgment of Grace
A Journey into Grace
The Authority of Grace
The Narrow Way Called Grace
Champions of God's Grace
The Glorious Cross
In Due Season You Will Know Why
The Certain Sound of Unity
Making an Invisible God Visible
Release the Treasure
Don't Wait Until It's Too Late
Authority Begins at the Cross
The Wilderness of Self-Rejection
Our Heart is Revealed by Our Walk
The Love of God
God's Purpose for Suffering
Thanks from a Grateful Heart
The Glorious Gospel
Seeing the Glory of God
The Heart of Christmas
Who Is Master of Your Soul?
Securing Your Identity in Christ
Living an Anointed Life
Gifts from the Heart of God

Removing the Barriers to Reconciliation
 Healing: Building Confidence in God's Power
 The Value of a Finished Work Relationship
 The Precious Lamb of God
 Is Tithing for Today?
 God Always Causes Us to Triumph
 Don't Live Outside of the Garden
 The Greatest Reward: Go for It!
 The Value of God's Name
 The Shepherd of My Soul
 Called to the King's Table
 Stress-Free Living
 God Calls You His Beloved
 Receive God's Provision Now!
 The Inseparable Power: The Sword and the Spirit
 Whatsoever You Do—Glorify God
 I Will Glory in the Cross
 Lift Up Your Eyes
 Living in Divine Absolutes
 We Are Going to See the King!
 God's Promises: Your Provision
 Keep Your Soul from Bitterness
 How God Measures Greatness
 Let the Word Uphold You
 The Value of a Broken Vessel
 Trophies of Grace
 Living in Resurrection Power
 Unbroken Fellowship
 Resurrection Life Through the Cross
 Choose Whom You Will Serve
 Do You Love Me More Than These?
 God Our Righteousness
 Self-Love versus Self-Occupation
 God Still Loves to Heal
 Guarding Against Temptation
 Beauty for Ashes
 Unity that Commands a Blessing
 Overcoming Eating Disorders
 Dealing with the Real Issues
 What Happened When You Received Christ?
 Prisoners of Grace
 Building Walls of Doctrine
 Brokenness
 Let Your Weakness Become God's Strength
 The Power of Our Confession

The Urgency of the Great Commission
 Our Quietness Reveals Satan's Defeat
 Moods and Mental Blocks
 Choose to Be Spirit-Filled
 This Book
 The Dark Side of Morality
 A Friend in Time of Failure
 Divine Convictions
 A Ministry of Mercy
 Who Is in Control?
 Divine Motivations
 Planted by the Waters
 The Sweet Savor of Grace
 A Walk That Defeats the Enemy
 Bringing Purpose to Temptation
 Cleansing of the Conscience
 The Eyes of A Loving Savior
 Why Did God Create Satan?
 The Principle of Gathering
 Leading People into Discipleship
 Focus on Mercy
 Fulfilled Prophecies from the Bible
 Making "Nothing" Count through the Power of God
 Dealing with a Lying Tongue
 Amen!
 Blessings through Obedience
 Called into a Raging Storm
 God's Love: A Real Revival
 Consider the Questions God Asks
 Hearing: The Key to Producing Fruit
 Social Drinking: Opinion or Conviction?
 The Sanctity of Marriage and the Family
 Manifest the Treasure
 What Spirit Are You Of?
 Responding to God's Initiation
 Understanding Delegated Authority
 True Intimacy
 The Door of Hope
 Come to the Father
 Show Me Your Way
 Stand Your Ground
 Victory Is Ours Through the Blood
 A New Name
 Measured by The Book
 Turn It Around Through Faith

Booklets by Other Authors

Bless the Lord
 Love Comes through Honor
 True Friendship
 Taking Your Place in the Body of Christ
 Protection through Contentment
 Let the Elder Serve the Younger
 That I May Know Him
 Settle the Issue
 Chambers of Imagery
 Conformed to Christ's Image
 by Paul M. Stevens
 The Pre-Tribulational Rapture
 by Dr. Daniel E. Lewis

Life's Winners Always Finish
 the Race—The Tenacious Turtle
 The Day of Days
 by Timothy J. Kelley
 Don't Forget Who You Are
 by James R. Brown
 Pardon versus Forgiveness
 by Bill Reed
 Preparing to Go
 by Thomas Schaller
 By His Spirit
 by Richard A. Bennett
 How Precious Is the Blood of Christ
 by Edward M. Lutz

Subscribe to "Doctrine Weekly" and receive a new booklet every week.

Call: (410) 483-3700, ext. 249 or, (410) 488-3520

or send the order form on the following page to:

Grace Publications • P.O. Box 18715 • Baltimore, MD 21206

Grace Publications Subscription Order Form

YOUR NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE (H): _____

PHONE (W): _____

HOME CHURCH _____

**OUTSIDE OF U.S.A. ONLY,
PLEASE ADD SHIPPING CHARGE:**

☐ 13- WEEK PLAN \$26.00

☐ 26-WEEK PLAN \$52.00

☐ 52-WEEK PLAN \$104.00

PAYMENT OPTION #1 (PAY IN FULL)

☐ **CHECK** (MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO GRACE PUBLICATIONS)

☐ VISA

☐ MC

☐ DISCOVER

☐ 13-WEEK PLAN @ \$49.95

☐ 26-WEEK PLAN @ \$84.95

☐ 52-WEEK PLAN @ \$159.95

CREDIT CARD # _____

Exp. DATE _____

PAYMENT OPTION #2 (CREDIT CARD INSTALLMENT PLAN)

☐ VISA

☐ MC

☐ DISCOVER

☐ 13-WEEK PLAN 3 PAYMENTS OF **\$16.65**

☐ 26-WEEK PLAN 6 PAYMENTS OF **\$14.99**

☐ 52-WEEK PLAN 12 PAYMENTS OF **\$13.33**

CREDIT CARD # _____

Exp. DATE _____

PAYMENT OPTION #3 (CASH/CHECK INSTALLMENT PLAN)

PLEASE CALL 410-488-3520 FOR DETAILS.

PLEASE ENCLOSE APPROPRIATE PAYMENT OR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION.

PLEASE ALLOW UP TO 4 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY.

SUBSCRIPTION AMT. \$ _____

SHIPPING CHARGE \$ _____

(see above)

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

