

SPIRIT-LED LIVING: Serve God's Kingdom With Power In the Last Days

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The Holy Spirit oversees the communication system of heaven. He is the One who reveals and transmits all truth to us, including future truth. Scripture says, "When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come" (John 16:13). That means everyone can hear the voice of God calling them to salvation, because the Holy Spirit brings it to them.

The Spirit doesn't suddenly stop speaking when a person gets saved. Once He's inside you, you are His temple and He speaks even more. Why would the Holy Spirit be inside us and not speak? That would not make sense!

Spirit Operations Procedure

The Spirit manages the power flow from heaven. Everyone who receives the Holy Spirit has the supernatural power of God available to them. Scripture says this plainly: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8). This is the prophetic nature of the church. It involves all the ways in which the Spirit communicates to us, plus all the ways the Spirit releases spiritual power into and through us. Although it's for everyone who has been born again, the majority of born-again people don't realize that. Therefore, they don't develop or walk in this power.

To me the prophetic lifestyle makes perfect sense. It's simply flowing with the Holy Spirit and allowing Him to energize us any way He chooses. In previous chapters I detailed the spiritual gifts and gave examples of how they manifest. Knowing these details is important, but it is more important to know the Holy Spirit personally and develop a primary dependence on His indwelling presence. We don't need to consciously think about which combination of energies, gifts, anointings, and supernatural manifestations is in operation in a given moment. We can just enjoy the flow of the Spirit.

Since the night my wife and I were baptized in the Holy Spirit, we have grown enough to flow with the Spirit without having to analyze or think about it too much. The supernatural life has become our normal life together. When we first started out, we used to think about it. Now our focus is on the fullness of our relationships with the Spirit. It's similar to our marriage. We know each other so well that we flow through life harmoniously. There's an ease about being together and having the same goals, as well as deferring to one another's wisdom and abilities. For those who desire a supernatural life, staying close to the Holy Spirit builds their skill levels and credibility.

A Prophet's Perspective of Grace

Here is how to look at the subject of grace from the perspective of a prophet. As a prophet I can write from this point of view. What I'm teaching has come from decades of studying God's Word and watching it play out through the numerous spiritual experiences I've had.

To become skilled in the ways of the Spirit, we must first learn an important principle: Grace is the assurance of our prophetic lives because grace is what makes prophetic revelation sure. In other words, to really put faith in what the Spirit is revealing, something must guarantee it. According to Paul, the assurance and guarantee of revelation

is grace.

Remember my working definition of *grace*? It is the unmerited favor and empowering presence of God enabling us to (1) be who He created us to be, and (2) do what He has called us to do. Grace is like an umbrella covering our redemption and lives in Jesus. As we learned earlier, however, grace also enables and empowers our unique spiritual giftings, along with everything the Spirit shows and tells us prophetically.

Prophetic grace is the atmosphere, and it becomes the assurance that what is revealed will come to pass. Grace is what makes every promise from God sure, *stable*, *valid*, and *guaranteed*.

“But don’t we have to obey?” you may ask.

Of course! That’s what faith is about. Yet faith can believe and trust only in what grace has already given as a sure offer—a stable, valid, guaranteed offer. Our faith then is the assurance of receiving the manifestation, because grace is already the assurance that God has given us His promise. You enter into grace by your faith, and your faith is a response to grace. The promise is prophetic truth, which contains an atmosphere of grace. Nothing can forcibly remove us from God’s grace. The devil can’t do it. Our friends can’t do it. Neither our families nor our enemies can do it. Not even our circumstances can remove us from God’s grace.

However, confusion, ignorance, shame, condemnation, doubt and unbelief can affect our faith and cause us to lose sight of grace. The good news is that God’s grace never leaves us. Spurgeon said it well: “The rain of his grace is always dropping; the river of his bounty is ever-flowing, and the well-spring of his love is constantly overflowing.” You can get right back on your faith and pick up where you left off. This applies to all revelations that are given to you throughout your life—everything from your salvation to the

Holy Spirit personally leading you in the flow of spiritual gifts.

Remember the encounter I described in the previous chapter about when Jesus showed me the revelation building? When I went into the first room, the salvation room, there were walls, a floor, and a ceiling, meaning the revelation had defined parameters. There was also an atmosphere within the room and a door that provided access. The walls, floor, and ceiling represent revelation. The atmosphere of the room represents the Spirit of grace, and the door represents faith, by which we gain access to the room.

Grace and truth are companions. The Bible is absolute truth. We know that. But let's frame it a little differently so we can grasp the prophetic aspect of truth. When God spoke to Abraham by revelation, Abraham didn't have scriptures for it. But God's promise matched what would eventually become Scripture. More than four hundred years later Moses wrote the Pentateuch, which became part of God's written Word and covered Abraham's experience. All revelations that come from the Father, from Jesus, and from the Holy Spirit are forms of spiritual truth. The following illustration helps us get a clearer picture.

God's written Word and personal word are boundaries of spiritual revelation, as represented by the circle in the illustration. The Bible, the written Word of God, is the *logos* of God, and every word spoken to us by the Spirit is the *rhema* of God. Both contain the promises of God. The revelation sets the spiritual boundaries of what we can believe or expect from God.

In the illustration grace and the Spirit within the circle compose the atmosphere of a revelation. Grace is always given with the promise to make the revelation sure so our faith can then access it. God would never reveal something to you apart from His accompanying grace. If He did, your intellect and

flesh would have to (or would try to) produce the revelation's fulfillment. The atmosphere of grace empowers you to walk out the revelation, and your faith gives you access.

Four Spiritual Equations for Understanding Grace and Truth

Understanding the workings of grace and truth is essential. The following spiritual equations can help us grasp larger truths where grace, truth and their effects are concerned.

Grace + Truth = Faith

Without grace you cannot have faith, and without truth you cannot have faith. It is the combination of grace and truth that triggers spiritual faith. God's revelation creates the room, and the Spirit's grace fills the atmosphere, allowing your faith to get you through the door.

Grace + Truth + Time = Success

Even though time is in our natural realm, God relates to us here. There is a divine timing involved with the fulfillment of His promises. Unless we realize this, we will become discouraged when the promise seems delayed and faith wanes. By faith and patience we inherit His promises (Heb. 6:12).

Grace – Truth = Confusion, Subjectivity, and Presumption

How can you have grace where there is no promise based in truth? If you don't really believe (or you believe only part of) a promise that's given, you become wishy-washy, confused, and presumptuous. But presumption is not faith. Neither is the need to see how things work out before you believe. Grace does not fill what-ifs and maybes. It fills truth.

Truth – Grace = Legalism and Lifeless Works

Technically, this equation refers to assumed truth. With grace missing, assumed truth can produce only legalistic performances and lifeless works driven by a sense of

obligation rather than true inspiration.

Misconceptions About Grace

Among Christians there are many misconceptions about grace. Let's address some of them, and then I'll point out what God's Word says is true.

Misconception 1: Grace kicks in when you don't have enough faith to get the job done.

Have you ever thought that? Or do you know someone who has? They may have said something such as, "I'm having trouble believing for that, so I'm just going to throw myself on the grace of God." They confused grace with mercy. Grace is God's attitude toward the undeserving; mercy is His attitude toward those who err. You can throw yourself on God's mercy when you ask for forgiveness of sin, but it is faith (and not its lack) that keeps you in His grace.

Truth: Faith is a response to grace. You can't have faith without it (Rom. 4:13; Eph. 2:8).

Misconception 2: We access grace only after we have done everything we can by our own abilities.

Grace authorizes and empowers everything we do in God's kingdom. If our services as believers are lacking grace, then they are nothing more than fleshly works. Here's the difference: When we are Spirit led and moving in grace, the Spirit empowers all that we do.

Truth: If your efforts are not born of grace, they cannot be credited to you as righteousness (Rom. 4:1-5; Gal. 3:1-3).

Misconception 3: Grace allows us to sin.

My point here is not *if we sin*. We *do* sin. My concern is the erroneous belief that grace makes sin OK. Repentance corrects sin and releases God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9). However, as I

mentioned, God's mercy heals the breaches in our relationships with Him. The attitude that sinning doesn't matter because God's grace covers it is in error.

Truth: The power of sin is flesh and legalism. Righteousness is empowered by grace (Rom. 6:11–15).

Misconception 4: Grace means we don't have to obey God or be responsible for our actions. It's a get-out-of-jail-free card.

Personal responsibility and obedience are big things with God. To judge your motives, He looks at your heart, not the weakness of your flesh. It's your individual responsibility to be Spirit led, to walk righteously, and to be accountable to Jesus (Gal. 5:25).

Truth: Grace produces the highest kind of responsibility, because it requires that you direct all the energies and efforts from your heart toward fulfilling God's will (1 Cor. 15:9–10).

Misconception 5: Grace leads to disorganization and chaos, and anything goes.

Chaos and confusion have nothing to do with grace. Grace is a principle that helps God's highly organized kingdom run smoothly and effectively. Going back to the revelation building analogy, grace is the atmosphere of a room with well-defined boundaries.

Truth: Grace represents the unshakable order of God's kingdom (Heb. 12:25–29).

Misconception 6: Grace is weak and passive.

There's a tendency for us to rationalize bypassing the Spirit and going straight to our own strengths and abilities to get the job done *for* God rather than *with* God. When Abraham and Sarah did that, they created Ishmael, a son of the flesh. Isaac was the son of promise, born of grace. When we attempt

to make God's promises happen by our own means, we birth Ishmaels (Gal. 4:23). I think Paul had this in mind when he said, "I do not set aside and invalidate and frustrate and nullify the grace (unmerited favor) of God" (Gal. 2:21, ampc).

Truth: In Scripture grace is never confused with passivity or failure. It's always coupled with truth, confidence, and power (John 1:14; Acts 4:33; Heb. 4:12).

Let's remember that we are focused on the ways of the Spirit. The better we understand the Holy Spirit's ways of interacting with us, the more skilled we can become at walking in His ways.

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