

WESTBORO BIG BOOK STUDY GROUP

All Saints Anglican Church

Saturday Morning 9:00 a.m.

347 Richmond Road (near Churchill)

Session10a.doc

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There Is A Solution

(Tape 3 - 00:00:23.0)

regained health of mind and body

J & C By now we could probably hardly wait to see what really did take place in Bill's life and how he recovered. And I don't think it's by accident the very next chapter is titled, 'There is a Solution'. There is a solution to the thing that Bill has really described in his own story here and to what Dr. Silkworth has talked to us about. Now

if our problem is (being) powerless which we should be convinced of that by now

then obviously the answer is going to lie within power.

And in this chapter there is a solution. We're going to talk about two powers. We're going to talk about

(1) the power of the fellowship and we're going to talk about (2) the power of the vital spiritual experience

And if we, who are powerless, could get both of these powers in our lives, then maybe we could overcome alcoholism also.

On page 17, for those who are powerless he writes the prescription. Here he talks about the two powers. Ebby presented Bill with a solution and now Bill is going to present us with a solution in the same way. He said there is a solution. A friend of mine back home said there's many different types of solutions there are people in A.A. And if you look at the chapter heading on, page 17, he'll tell you how many solutions there are,

"There is a solution", (ONE)

J & C He said, "We", and there's that big word again.

Big Book p. 17, par. 1 "We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, know thousands of men and women who were once just as hopeless as Bill. Nearly all have recovered. They have solved the drink problem. We are average Americans."

J & C Today we can say that we're average citizens of the world because by last count (1988) there was, A.A.'s in 154 countries around the world.

Big Book p. 17, par. 2 "All sections of this country and many of its occupations are represented, as well as many political, economic, social, and religious backgrounds. We are people who normally would not mix."

J & C And I think that we're probably the most mixed up group of alcoholics in the world here this morning here in Laughlin, Nevada. You know if we didn't have "Alcoholics Anonymous" to talk about or drinking or recovery there from, I wonder what we would drink about/talk about. There's hardly anything... I told you I had a good memory it's just short. We wouldn't have anything to talk about. It says,

Big Book p. 17, par. 2 "We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful."

J & C And I hear that this morning and before the meeting all the talk and the laughter and the goings on, that's the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, the spirit of Alcoholics Anonymous, and I got sober on the spirit of Alcoholics Anonymous. That was the only thing keeping me here. So it's a powerful thing, the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, kept me sober for quite some time.

the fellowship can keep you sober for quite some time, but it can't keep you sober forever (without the program in the book)

Now he's going to describe this fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. By talking about something he already assumes that we know about it, he thinks that we already know about it and all great teachers have always done this. When they want to teach you something

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new, they talk to you first about something you already know and use that as an example to teach you something new. You know we had a great teacher that lived 2000 years ago and he was really good at this. When he wanted to teach something to the shepherds, he'd tell them a story about sheep. But if he wanted to teach the same thing to the fisherman he would change the story, this time it would be about fish. Then when he went to the farmer he talked about cattle and grains. All good teachers do this. Bill is going to use the example of the great passenger ship. He said,

Big Book p. 17, par. 2 "We are like the passengers of a great liner the moment after rescue from shipwreck when camaraderie, joyousness and democracy pervade the vessel from steerage to Captain's table."

J & C Bill is referring to a time in the Thirties when your mode of transportation from one continent to another was by the great ocean liners. And on those great ocean liners they had what they called the steerage section. And people who were immigrants and didn't have very much money they usually booked passage in the steerage section. Way down in the bowels of the ship, with very little fresh air, dormitory style living, I call it the cheese sandwich section, not very good down there. If you had a little more money though and you wanted better accommodations you could pay for fourth class and come up a deck or two. Maybe you could go third class and come up another deck or two. Maybe you could go second class and come up another deck or two. And each time the accommodations and the food were better. If you had enough money you could go in what they call first class. In first class they had big fine staterooms, they had great dining rooms, they had good food, fine waiters, access to fresh air all the time. But that still wasn't the most elite place on the ship. If you had the right kind of money, old, old money, old money, if you had the right religion, the right ethnic background, the right everything, you might be invited to dine at the Captain's table. Just a few select people could do that. And at the Captain's table you had the best of everything; the best service, the best food, the best everything. Now it's a long, long way from the Captain's table to the steerage section.

And in the journey across the ocean, those two people should never have met each other. In fact most of those ocean liners even had separate stairwells. So the first class people never even had to see those who rode in the steerage section. They had nothing whatsoever in common. Then I think about the Titanic. When the night it hit the iceberg and these two guys are standing there at the rail of the ship and one of them got his tuxedo on, his shiny shoes and his little bow tie and everything that goes with it. Standing next to him is the guy from the steerage section. Got his old work overalls on, his old brogans, never wore a tie in his life. These guys have nothing whatsoever in common with each other until they jumped overboard. And when they jumped overboard, and their butts hit that cold water, they had something in common. How in the hell do we save ourselves? And they grabbed on to each other and held on to each other, and I doubt very seriously if the man from the Captain's table asked for a financial statement from the man from the steerage section. And when these two guys were rescued and got back on another ship or back on land there was a feeling amongst them, which was indescribably wonderful. This has always been true

When people escape from a common peril
there is a feeling that ties them together and it's one of the greatest feelings in the world
and that's what we've got in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We don't care who you are.

We don't care where you came from.

We don't care how much money you got.

We don't care what your education is.

We don't care what your ethnic background is, what your religion is or anything else.

All we want to know is, are you an alcoholic?

And if you are, there is a feeling amongst us, which is indescribably wonderful.

Even though we are so different from each other, we are still bound together.

Now watch him, he's going to give us a warning.

Big Book p. 17, par. 2 "Unlike the feelings of the ship's passengers, however, our joy in escape from disaster does not subside as we go our individual ways."

J & C These two guys when they finally got back on shore, they looked at each other and said well we really don't belong together, and they separated probably never to meet again. But we will always be alcoholic, and this feeling we have for each other never goes away and we find it again in city, after city, after city, and country after country.

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One of the greatest things I've been able to experience in my lifetime is to go to an A.A. meeting in a foreign country and feel just exactly as good as I did at home. Even though I don't know those people we are bound together because we're alcoholics.

Big Book p 17, par. 2 "The feeling of having shared in a common peril **is one element** in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined."

J & C In other words, this feeling we have for each other in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is one of the things that bind us together. But then he said, that itself is not enough.

Big Book p. 17, par. 3 "The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action. This is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism."

J & C Not the news of the fellowship, but the news of the common solution. And later on we're going to see where

the common solution
is the spiritual experience
brought about through the program of action.

This is the prescription that J & C refers to on page 1 of this script

if we can get the power of the fellowship - which supports us and helps us, and if we can get the power of the spiritual experience - which changes us, and add the two together then that will be enough power to overcome our powerlessness over alcohol and we can recover from that condition.

I think one of the greatest tragedies that I see in the world today, and there's lots of tragedies going on in the world today, one of the greatest that I see is we people who are in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous are spending literally hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars, hundreds and hundreds and thousands of men and women work hours, trying to attract other alcoholics to the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, when

we've got thousands and thousands (of alcoholics) who are already members of Alcoholics Anonymous who are sitting around dying from untreated alcoholism, because they are doing nothing about the common solution.

And the reason they're doing nothing about the common solution is nobody's telling them about it.
nobody's talking about it.
nobody's saying look, here's the **program of action.**
nobody's saying, let me take you by the hand and walk with you so you can have a **spiritual experience.**

And they're fellowship only, and after a while they go back to drinking and they say well, A.A. don't work for us. No, they didn't work for A.A.; they didn't do the program.

the fellowship can keep you sober for quite some time, but it can't keep you sober forever (without the program in the book)

And again it's not their fault,
it's our fault
we're not insisting that new people work the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and
we're letting them die around us.

