

# WESTBORO BIG BOOK STUDY GROUP

All Saints Anglican Church

Saturday Morning 9:00 a.m.

347 Richmond Road (near Churchill)

Session10b.doc

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## There Is A Solution

(Tape 3 -00:11:05.3)

A good textbook never tells you anything but what it doesn't back it up and prove it. The first half of this chapter is designed to show you and I why fellowship alone is not sufficient.

The last half of this chapter is used to show us the solution to alcoholism, the vital spiritual experience. Let's look for just a few minutes at why fellowship alone is not sufficient and then we'll take a break. Go to page 20,

*Big Book p. 20, par. 2* "You may already have asked yourself why it is that all of us became so very ill from drinking. Doubtless you are curious to discover how and why, in the face of expert opinion to the contrary, we have recovered from a hopeless condition of mind and body. If you are an alcoholic who wants to get over it, you may already be asking What do I have to do? It is the purpose of this book to answer such questions specifically."

J & C Remember last night we talked about precisely, specifically, with clear-cut directions. Well here's one of those words.

*Big Book p. 20, par. 3* "We shall tell you what we have done. Before going into a detailed discussion, it may be well to summarize some points as we see them."

*How many time people have said to us: "I can take it or leave it alone. Why can't he?" "Why don't you drink like a gentleman or quit?" "That fellow can't handle his liquor." "Why don't you try beer and wine?" "Lay off the hard stuff." "His will power must be weak." "He could stop if he wanted to." "She's such a sweet girl, I should think he'd stop for her sake." "The doctor told him that if he ever drank again it would kill him, but there he is all lit up again."*

*Now these are commonplace observations on drinkers which we hear all the time. Back of them is a world of ignorance and misunderstanding. We see that these expressions refer to people whose reactions are very different from ours."*

J & C And we're going to look at two kinds of drinkers that these expressions that Joe just read, would refer to them.

*Big Book p. 20, par. 6* "Moderate drinkers have little trouble in giving up liquor entirely if they have good reason for it. They can take it or leave it alone."

J & C Remember we talked about them last night. They have a couple of drinks; they get a slightly tipsy out of control beginnings of a nauseous feeling? Alcohol is no big deal for them. If they have any problems with it, they simply leave it alone. Those expressions that Joe read would certainly refer to the moderate drinker.

*Big Book p. 20, par. 7* "Then we have a certain type of hard drinker. He may have the habit badly enough to gradually impair him physically and mentally. It may cause him to die a few years before his time. If a sufficiently strong reason ill health, falling in love, change of environment, or the warning of a doctor becomes operative, this man can also stop or moderate, although he may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention."

J & C We call this guy the heavy or the hard drinker. They drink like we alcoholics drink, but they are not alcoholic. If a good enough reason presents itself to them, they'll do one of two things. They may learn to moderate their drinking; they do not have the physical allergy. They may quit drinking entirely and stay quit; they do not have the obsession of the mind. They drink like us, but they're not alcoholic. You and I see them all the time. They're the guy that said when I was in the service I was an alcoholic also. And when I got out of the service I got married, went to church, quit drinking, don't see why in the hell you can't. No, they're not alcoholic. The expressions that Joe read in the beginning refer to the heavy drinker.

*Big Book p. 21, par. 2* "But what about the real alcoholic? He may start off as a moderate drinker;

J & C Which many of us did.

*Big Book, p. 21, par 2* "he may or may not become a continuous hard drinker;

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J & C Some of us stayed periodic.

*Big Book, p. 21, par 2* “but at some stage of his drinking career he begins to lose all control of his liquor consumption, once he starts to drink.”

J & C Now then we’re going to describe the real alcoholic, and when you see a description in there that fits you, would you please raise your hand. We’d like to see if we’re in a room full of real alcoholics.

*Big Book p. 21, par. 2* “but at some stage of his drinking career he begins to lose all control of his liquor consumption, once he starts to drink.”

J & C Charlie talked last night about; he talked last night about crossing over that line. He talked last night about crossing over that line, but I don’t know what line he was talking about, but I know one thing; I was drunk when I went over it.

*Big Book p. 21, par. 3* “*Here is the fellow who has been puzzling you, especially in his lack of control. He does absurd, incredible, tragic things while drinking. He is a real Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. He is seldom mildly intoxicated. He is always more or less insanely drunk.*”

J & C Anybody like that in here? You betcha.

*Big Book p. 21, par 3* “*His disposition while drinking resembles his normal nature but little.*”

J & C I always get good looking and out of debt as soon as I start drinking.

*Big Book p. 21, par 3* “*He may be one of the finest fellows in the world. Yet let him drink for a day, and he frequently becomes disgustingly, and even dangerously anti-social.*”

J & C We got any of those people in here?

*Big Book p. 21, par 3* “*He has a positive genius for getting tight at exactly the wrong moment, particularly when some important decision must be made or engagement kept.*”

J & C Anybody in here like that, always getting drunk at the wrong time. Now everybody holds their hand up here on this one.

*Big Book p. 21, par 3* “*He is often perfectly sensible and well balanced concerning everything except liquor, but in that respect he is incredibly dishonest and selfish. He often possesses special abilities, skills, and aptitudes, and has a promising career ahead of him.*”

J & C Anybody like that in here? I’ve never heard anybody but an alcoholic say that though. I’ve never heard an AlAnon say it yet.

*Big Book p. 21, par 3* “*He uses his gifts to build up a bright outlook for his family and himself, and then pulls the structure down on his head by a senseless series of sprees.*”

J & C Anybody like that in here?

*Big Book p. 21, par 3* “*He is the fellow who goes to bed so intoxicated he ought to sleep the clock around. Yet early next morning he searches madly for the bottle he misplaced the night before.*”

J & C Any bottle hidiers in here?

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*Big Book p. 22, par1* "If he can afford it, he may have liquor concealed all over his house to be certain no one gets his entire supply away from him to throw down the waste pipe."

J & C Anybody spread them around wherever you might be? Phyllis and I used to by a lug of whiskey, which is 3 fifths; one to share, and one to hide from each other.

*Big Book p. 22, par1* "As matters grow worse, he begins to use a combination of high-powered sedative and liquor to quiet his nerves so he can go to work."

J & C Anybody ever have to have a little something in the morning?

*Big Book p. 22, par 1* "Then comes the day when he simply cannot make it and gets drunk all over again. Perhaps he goes to a doctor who gives him morphine or some sedative with which to taper off. Then he begins to appear at hospitals and (treatment, uh excuse me), sanitariums.

J & C I never did taper off, I always tapered on for some reason.

*Big Book p. 21, par 2* "This is by no means a comprehensive picture of the true alcoholic, as our behavior patterns vary. But this description should identify him roughly."

J & C Now if our government has ever done anything right in the field of alcoholism, it's the education of the public as to what alcoholism is and what it isn't. Because of that a lot of the stigma has been removed from alcoholism. Many, many people are getting to us today before they have to do everything here that describes the real alcoholic. And I'll guarantee you if you're alcoholic you found yourself in there somewhere; at least one of them are going to fit you. In my case practically every one of them, one in particular. Seven years after I got sober I sold a forty-acre, forty-five thousand boiler chicken operation. For years after that, every once in a while I would run into the guy that bought it and sometimes he would way and smile and say, hey Charlie, we have found another one. And he was referring to partially empty vodka bottles. Behind corner posts, under rocks, hollow trees, falling out of feed bins. And he found them for years in there. Now here's the question,

*Big Book p. 22, par. 3* "Why does he behave like this? If hundreds of experiences have shown him that one drink means another debacle with all its attendant suffering and humiliation, why is it he takes that one drink? Why can't he stay on the water wagon?"

J & C The moderate drinker can. The heavy drinker can. Why can't the alcoholic?

*Big Book p. 22, par. 3* "What has become of the common sense and will power that he still sometimes displays with respect to other matters?"

*Perhaps there never will be a full answer to these questions. Opinions vary considerably as to why the alcoholic reacts differently from normal people. We are not sure why, once a certain point is reached, little can be done for him. We cannot answer the riddle. We know that while the alcoholic keeps away from drink, as he may do for months or years, he reacts much like other men. We are equally positive that once he takes any alcohol whatever into his system, something happens, both in the bodily and mental sense, which makes it virtually impossible for him to stop. The experience of any alcoholic will abundantly confirm this. These observations would be academic and pointless if our friend never took the first drink, thereby setting the terrible cycle in motion. Therefore, the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body.*

J & C Would you read that again please?

*Big Book p. 23, par. 1, line 3* "Therefore, the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body."

(Tape 3 -00:20.16.5)

9 minutes