

WESTBORO BIG BOOK STUDY TAPE GROUP

All Saints Anglican Church

Saturday Morning 9:00 a.m.

347 Richmond Road (near Churchill)

Session 14b.doc

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More About Alcoholism

(Tape 3 - 01:22:55.0)

J & C Now if you're the kind of alcoholic that I am, and if you were raised in the kind of church setting that I was raised in, by the end of Chapter 3 you are now faced with one hell of a dilemma. Because he's convinced me in Chapter 3, without the aid of a power greater than I am, I'm going back to drinking. But I also felt that even though that was true, it would be, it wouldn't be possible for me to get the aid of a power greater than I am.

Because you see, like Joe, I was raised in a good old southern Baptist church. Now I've got nothing against the good old southern Baptist church, it's a great church. But when I was a kid growing up, I'm sure that from time to time they talked about a kind and a loving God. But if they did, the message never got to the pew I sat in. Cause all I ever remember hearing about God when I was growing up in church was hellfire and brimstone and going to hell for lying and cheating and stealing and drinking whiskey and committing adultery. By the time I got to AA I had been doing that for about 20 some odd years. I knew that God had already told St. Peter, "When that little four eyed sucker gets up here send him downstairs. We'll not need his kind." And I knew that if God had anything to do with me it wouldn't be anything good. It would certainly be something bad.

I remember so clearly when I separated from God. In that Baptist church I grew up in, they gave me the rules. They said if you do this, this and this you'll be OK. If you that, that and that you're going to hell just as sure as anything. Now I didn't have any trouble with the rules at all, until I got to be about 12 or 13 years old. And one day it seemed to me that the preacher looked me straight in the eye and he said "Son, to think about doing it is just as bad as doing it". And I said, "Oh shit". I've had it now because I'd been thinking about doing it for a long time. In fact I'd been thinking about doing it long enough I was starting to get brain damage from it. And I said "If you're going to hell for thinking about it then you might as well just go ahead and do it". And I did. And I didn't go to hell immediately. And I said "That sucker has been lying to me all along". I said, he and my parents and my teachers have formed together in a conspiracy to keep me from having any fun. And I said, from this day on I do not intend to pay any attention to what they have to say. I don't have any intention of following God's rules, their rules or anybody else's rules. From this day on I'm going to do it my way. And I'm going to do it whenever I want to and if they don't like it, to hell with them.

Now when I got to AA, I had that attitude of a 12-year-old boy who had defied God, his parents and his teachers. When I first walked into AA I was 38 years old with the spiritual knowledge of God of that 12 year old boy. No wonder we have trouble with this God thing when we get to AA. Anybody else ever have those kinds of feelings about God and people?

And I think Bill recognized that. And I think he said, "Sooner or later I'm going to have to ask these people to make a decision about God". And I think he said in his mind that they're not going to be able to make that decision based upon old ideas. And that's what I had when I got here, old ideas. And I think he said, "I believe I need to give them some new information about God". Where they might be able to discard some old ideas, pick up some new ideas, and then they'll be able to make a decision about this God thing.

And he wrote another Chapter called, **We Agnostics**, which I think is one of the greatest pieces of spiritual information I've ever read in my life. As I read that and studied that I could see where some of my old ideas, old prejudices, about God and religion, were wrong. And when I could see where they were wrong then I could discard them, and then I could accept some new ideas about God and then I could make a decision. Now based on hellfire and brimstone, based on a God of justice, no way could I have ever made the decision about God. Thank God for Chapter 4. Let's look at just a little bit of it just before we go to lunch.

Dr. Jung told Rowland about ideas, emotions and attitudes. That's what we're going to be looking at now. Ideas, emotions and attitudes, which were the guiding force of the lives of these people, are suddenly cast to one side. And certainly the ideas, emotions and attitudes that I had toward God were that of a 7 or 8 year old boy. I couldn't accept it then, I couldn't accept it later, I couldn't accept it when I got here and I can't accept it today because I need new ideas and emotions and attitudes about this. New information is what I'm trying to say.

This chapter **We Agnostic**, just the word agnostic means something to me.

nostic means knowledge
put the **ag** in front of it, it means without.
Those of us who are without knowledge.

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And that was me. And the knowledge that I did have was not good. And Bill had the same experiences that we did. When Ebby presented him with the solution he was aghast at that solution. Some of us are aghast at that solution also. And Bill said "When they talked of a God personal to me my mind became irritated and my mind snapped shut against such theories." And certainly that's the way that I did. Later on in the book it says to us that when the spiritual malady is overcome we straighten out mentally and physically, the spiritual malady.

The understanding of God of my understanding.

When that is straightened out we will straighten out mentally and physically. And this chapter here, We Agnostic, is an attempt to do that.

And as Father Bill Wilson, some of you know Father Bill said to us many, many times, and I love it, he said that this chapter is not put here to teach me that there is any particular type of religion or type of God. He said this chapter is simply put here so that I might read, question and wonder and get some ideas, emotions and attitudes, some new ones. And open up my mind to the point that God might prove to me there is a God. Now with that understanding of this chapter, it makes more sense to me and becomes extremely valuable in my life.

Big Book p. 44, par. 1 In the preceding chapters, you have learned something of alcoholism. We hope we have made clear the distinction between the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic. If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely,

J & C because of the obsession

Big Book p. 44, par. 1 cont. or if, when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take,

J & C because of the allergy

Big Book p. 44, par. 1 cont. you are probably alcoholic.

J & C God isn't that simple? Isn't that simple?

You see how people like to expand on things. They took the 2 questions out of the big book and some years later they made a little pamphlet that had 10 questions in it. And that wasn't enough, they made another one that had 20 questions in it. Hell I think we're up to 44 today aren't we? Thank God that Ebby didn't have the 44 questions with him when he walked into Bill's kitchen. He'd have said "Bill, has alcohol been bothering your reputation?" Hadn't had a reputation in years. Then he would have said, "Bill has alcohol been interfering with your sex life?". If he was anything like I was he wouldn't have had any of that in a long time either. There's a statement in the 44 questions says "Do you drink alone?" Well think about it. If I'm buying yes, and if you're buying, no.

We had an old friend that used to live in Tyler, Texas. His name was Wino Joe. I've always felt sorry for everybody in AA that didn't get to meet Wino Joe. He was a real character. He's dead now. But Wino Joe had made up his own list to ask yourself to see if you're alcoholic. And the first question on his list was "Has the roof of your mouth ever been sunburned while drinking?"

He said, "If it has, you're probably alcoholic." I think the second question was "Have you ever been arrested for drunk driving from the back seat of somebody else's car?" The third one I loved was "Have you ever been arrested for public drunk while in jail?" He had a real list of them.

We only need these two. I use them all the time.

(Tape 3 - 01:32:15.0)

10 minutes