

WESTBORO BIG BOOK STUDY TAPE GROUP

All Saints Anglican Church

Saturday Morning 9:00 a.m.

347 Richmond Road (near Churchill)

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Step 4 Chapter 5 - How It Works

(Tape 6 - 00:03:42.6)

Good morning everyone. My name is Joe and I'm an alcoholic. And it's truly by God's grace and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and the program of Alcoholics Anonymous that I found in the book call Alcoholics Anonymous I'm sober today and for that I'm very, very thankful. And I've been sober ever since I quit drinking. And that was on November 3, 1973 and for that I'm truly thankful. And it's good to be here this morning isn't it? You guys have really been great this weekend. We really appreciate all the friendship and the friendliness that we've found her this weekend. It's been great. Made us feel real good and welcome. And I want to thank the committee again for all the hard work that they've done in putting this thing on and thank each and every one of you for being here. It's been a great weekend. Thank you.

Good morning everyone. My name is Charlie Parmley...lack of power was his dilemma...and I'm a very grateful recovering alcoholic this morning...because I'm a member of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and by the grace and the power that I found in the 12 step program of Alcoholics Anonymous I haven't found it necessary to take a drink in 10518 days today one day at a time and for this I am very grateful.

You guys look great this morning. Golly, not a resentment left in the whole bunch. Isn't that something? How many of you went back to where you were staying last night and worked on at least one resentment? Can I see your hands? Oh yah a bunch of you did. How many of you got rid of at least one resentment? Can I see your hands? Great. How many of you did we give a new resentment to yesterday afternoon? Can we see your hands? Pray for us. We need the prayers and you need the practice.

Oh I think I'll start out this morning with a little spiritual story, a little spiritual joke. Since it is Sunday morning.

This is a story about a new young priest. And he was so nervous at his first mass that he could barely speak. And before his second week in the pulpit he asked the Monsignor what he could do to relax himself. And the Monsignor said "Well next week before you do the mass" he said " why don't you put a little vodka in your water pitcher and after a few sips everything would probably be OK". Well sure enough the new young priest, before the next mass he put the vodka in the water pitcher and everything turned out just great. No embarrassment, could talk freely, no problems whatsoever. Well when he returned back to the rectory, he found a note from the Monsignor which said

#1 – Next time I suggest you sip at the water pitcher rather than gulp at it

#2 – There are 10 commandments not 12

#3 – There are 12 disciples not 10

#4 – David slew Goliath he didn't kick the shit of him

#5 – We do not refer to our Savior Jesus Christ and his apostles as J.C. and the boys

#6 – Next week there's a taffy pulling contest at St Peters not a peter pulling contest at St Taffys

#7 – We do not refer to the cross as The Big T

#8 – Last but not least, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are not referred to as Big Daddy, Junior and the Spook

That's probably about as spiritual as we'll get this morning too. We went through a process yesterday afternoon, the first part of the inventory process. There we learn how to look at our resentments. To take an honest, truthful, moral inventory. And as we listed those resentments we begin to see the truth about them really. Now the first thing we saw in column 1 is how many resentments we really did have. How much that blocked us off from the sunlight of the spirit. The second thing we saw in column 2 is it's not those people or institutions we resent, it's what they've done to us that we actually resent. The third thing we found out in column 3, it's really not even what they've done to us, it's how we choose to react to a threat to one of our basic instincts of life which is going to determine whether we are resentful or not.

So just in filling out those three columns we've learned some very valuable information. Also we're able to see in the big book that resentments was an absolute waste of time. That whenever they're churning around in our heads we're pretty well paralyzed from doing anything worthwhile, and we find that if we honestly look at them, most of us have spent literally thousands and thousands of hours in resentments and as we look back at that time in our lives we can see where they never did do us any good. They never did straighten up a relationship with another human being. Never made us feel better, only made us feel worse. Never made us any money for sure. And as far as we can tell it's absolute wasted time. Now we also said that's not the worst thing about a resentment. The worst thing is it very effectively blocks us off from God. Blocked off from God we don't feel good. We begin to become insane.

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We begin to think about taking a drink. The next thing you know we end up drunk all over again. And when we truthfully and honestly looked at those resentments we could really begin to see how other people have controlled and dominated us throughout our entire lifetime through those resentments.

Now we always thought that we had it under control. That we determined what we said and what we did. But we suddenly realized that we really have done nothing but react to others through our resentment toward them. That looked so stupid to us that about 95% of those resentments disappeared. The other 5% that were so deeply embedded we found through prayer that we could remove them also so we could be resentment free if we follow the procedure outlined in the big book. The real revealing thing is though, the amazing thing is that after we became resentment free God wouldn't allow another hole in our head it had to be replaced with something else. The only thing that could replace it was the opposite of the resentment. And where we used to feel resentment we now feel serenity, a little peace of mind, a little happiness, compassion, goodwill, love. Those are all God's thinking rather than our individual thinking. And we found that that came to us automatically. Those things had always been a part of us, we just never could use them before.

Now the resentments are gone and God's thinking automatically begins to replace the resentment and we're much less chance of getting drunk now than we were when we started the process. We went back to the resentment sheet and we looked at it from an entirely different angle now. We begin to look at it to see what had we done to set that thing in motion or what did we do, we had never looked at before. And in our fourth column we found that in almost all cases whatever the resentment was we ourselves did something to set it in motion. And we hurt other people, the retaliated, we resented, we played the resentment over and over and over, distorted the picture, finally transferred all blame to other people. A good practicing alcoholic has to be able to do that. We just couldn't live if we didn't have that ability. So we really in the fourth column really did begin to look at the truth of the resentment to see the part that we had played. And in most cases we ourselves set the ball rolling. We looked in the fifth column to see the exact nature of that resentment. The resentment was the wrong, but what was the actual core of it or at the center of it? And in the fifth column we found the type personality that we had developed through the years of living on self-will and living as a practicing alcoholic. And we found that just about every time that we had hurt anybody in the past it was either through selfishness or through dishonesty or because we were self-seeking frightened or through inconsideration of other people. And we begin to see in the fifth column that if we don't change those things were going to keep right on doing the same things in sobriety that we use to do when drinking. We're going to continue to hurt people, they're going to retaliate, and we're going to resent and eventually get drunk over it. And we begin to see in the fifth column the things that we will need to change in our personality if we want to live with peace of mind, serenity and happiness in the future.

We summed it up by saying we're in the process of doing the resentment part of step 4. In the fifth column we now had all the information we needed for steps 5,6 and 7. And then the names in the first column, those that we had harmed, they come off of there to be added to the list to be used for 8 and 9 at a later date. So we really ended up in this simple little inventory with all the information we needed for 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 resentment wise. Very positive thing took place. Resentments disappeared and they were replaced with patience, tolerance, compassion and goodwill. So there was nothing to be afraid of. There was nothing too complicated. There was not a list of dirt, filthy, nasty items, just a simple inventory.

Now we don't want to give you the impression that you can always be 100% free of resentments. You know God never gave us anything bad. It depends on what we do with things on whether they become bad or not. A resentment used right can be used for a worthwhile purpose. If somebody does something to me that threatens my self esteem, if it would cause me to look at me and see some things that I need to change and I go ahead and make those changes then that resentment can be used for a worthwhile purpose. For instance if we are living in a neighborhood. All the old houses are run down. Mines no worse than anybody else. They all need painting, they've got broken window screens and panes. And I sit on my front porch every evening after work and I rock and I rock and I'm very complacent about that situation. One day I look up though and some idiot has moved in across the street. He's put there painting his house, fixing his window screens and windowpanes. Makes my house look bad. I resent the hell out him for doing that. I say, "Who in the hell is he moving in here and screwing up this whole neighborhood?" "Now if I use that resentment right it will cause me to look at my house and become a little bit ashamed of it. Next thing you know I paint my house, fix my window screens and windowpanes. My next door neighbor resents me for doing so. Next thing you know he fixes his house up and his neighbor resents him and after a while God's got the whole neighborhood cleaned up like it should have been in the first place. That's the proper use of a resentment. But we alcoholics won't use it that way. We'll sit on the front porch and we'll rock and we'll rock and we'll resent

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and we'll resent. Thirty days later we'll go over there at midnight and we'll burn his damn house down. We'll show him. So it really depends on what we do with resentments that determines whether they are going to be for bad or good. And if we use one rightly it's going to disappear anyhow.

The ones that kill us are those that we just leave in our head and they just fester and fester and fester and we get sicker and sicker until eventually it creates a real problem for us. Joe?

(Tape 6 - 00:16:00.5)

13 minutes