

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

(Tape 6 - 00:30:12.8)

J & C Now let's go the fourth column.

We go to the fourth column and we try to put out of our minds all these things that happened so far and we write down "What did I do?" What did I do to set the ball rolling? Did I do the crime to do the time? Yes I did that. When my wife was going to divorce me and I was fearful of it, what did I do? What were some of the things that I did? Well I was uncaring for her, I didn't care about her. Didn't consider her in any manner, in any way. And therefore I was afraid and I didn't know that. See I really did know that I was afraid of those things.

It told us way back in step 3 that we invariably find that we've made decisions based on self, which later placed us in a position to be hurt. And we made decisions trying to satisfy our basic instincts of life and running on self-will those basic instincts become insatiable things, we never get enough to satisfy them, and we are continually doing things that end up hurting and harming and creating other people. Then we've got to be scared to death of what they're going to do whenever they catch us. And even if they don't catch us, the guilt and the remorse eats us up here just like with resentments. So we begin to look at the part we played and we find that we did the same thing with fears that we did with resentments. As we play them over and over and over in our head, we actually distorted the picture and the fears that we have in our head today are not true. Oh they started on truth but they are no longer true. You see that's one of the definitions of one of those wrongs

fear is incorrect believing

And if we carefully look at each one of these fears we're going to find that they are absolutely wrong. They started with truth, we distorted the picture, and once again we've used them to transfer blame to others so we don't ever have to look at ourselves. Same identical thing as with resentments.

Now let's look into the fifth column. In the fifth column I simply looked down in these instances.

Was I selfish in those instances, in those particular items? Yes I was very selfish. Because I was so fearful I was selfish. I was afraid I was going to lose things that I already had or I was afraid I wasn't going to get some things that I wanted.

Was I dishonest? Yes I was dishonest. I took things from other people that didn't belong to me. And I was very dishonest. It seemed to me that to be successful in any manner was OK with me. So I was an extremely dishonest person and I certainly didn't know that particularly.

And then I was self-seeking and frightened and inconsiderate of other people for sure. Cause I wanted what I wanted when I wanted it and I didn't make a damn how I got it was the way I looked at my life. And if you got in my way, you just shouldn't have. So I was a very selfish, self-seeking, frightened and inconsiderate individual and I did not know that.

You know it's absolutely a life living on hell whenever you're scared to death that you're not going to get something that you really do want it. And then through dishonesty you go ahead and get it. And then you've got to be scared to death of whatever they're going to do you whenever they catch you. And even if they don't get you, the guilt and the remorse eats you up. And our lives really do become an absolute living hell in trying to satisfy these basic instincts of life and we just really drive ourselves absolutely dingy until we get an opportunity to really truthfully look at these things. Now out there in that fifth column once again we see the exact nature of the wrong. The fears are what's wrong because we find out most of them are incorrect. They're what block us off from God. But what's the actual truth behind them?

Well if we wasn't so selfish, if we wasn't so dishonest, if we were not so self-seeking, frightened, and inconsiderate we wouldn't have to experience near as much fear as we do.

But I'll guarantee you if I stay selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened and inconsiderate, the same old things are going to drive me, I'm going to do the same old things I've always done. Fear, guilt, remorse is going to absolutely eat me up. Sooner or later it blocks me off from God, it causes me to get drunk. So once again what we're doing here in this little inventory sheet. We are doing step 4. This is the fear part of it.

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Out in this fifth column we see the exact nature of the wrong for step 5, the defects for step 6, the shortcomings that we're going to ask God to take away in step 7, and then once again many of the names over here in column 1 will be people and institutions we've harmed and we're scared to death of what they're going to do whenever they catch us.

So those names will come off of column 1, they'll be added to the sheet to be used later on for steps 8 and 9. We got some off the resentment sheet; we got some off of the fear sheet also. And one thing that absolutely amazed me is that when I really looked at this truthfully is I begin to see a lot of the names, same names appearing on the fear sheet that I had on the resentment sheet. I had never tied that together in my head before. Barbara was on both sheets. I resented her and I certainly feared her. And I'm still a little bit afraid of that lady today. If she ever finds out everything that I was doing about 30 years ago, she's probably going to file for divorce again. I don't know. I resented the Internal Revenue Service and I feared the Internal Revenue Service. They were also on those sheets and I never really had tied that together in my head.

Now if you think resentments look stupid in your head, wait till you get these things down on paper about fears. Now fears look awful good in your head. But when you get them down on a sheet of paper they really do look double dumb when you see the truth about them. Resentments look stupid; hell fears look even worse than that. And they look so dumb that about 95% of them are going to disappear anyhow when you see the truth about them. Once again there is going to be about 1,2,3,4 or 5 that's been embedded in our minds so deeply that we're probably going to have a little help in order to get rid of some of those. We now come to the second prayer in the big book on step 4 regarding fears.

You know when I prayed for those people that I resented my ideas, emotions and attitudes towards them changed. They didn't change but I did. Now prior to this idea about these fears, my whole attitude and outlook upon life was involved in these fears. And I had fears in every area of my life and didn't know it, because I hadn't had a God in my life either. But I took step 3 and I've got God in my life and now I'm on a different basis. And the book says.

Big Book p. 68, par. 2 "Perhaps there is a better way, we think so. For we are now on a different basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity. We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear."

J & C And you know as I look back at that, my sponsor told me in those early days, he said the most important thing about prayer, the 2 most important things about prayer. One of them is to start and the other one is to continue. And as I look back over my life I can see that every time I prayed I change just a minute amount, just hardly noticeable. The next time I prayed it was just a little bit more. And the next time I prayed it was just a little bit more. And as time goes by I can see a real reliance upon God today in my life. It wasn't that way in the beginning. But when I started trusting and relying upon God rather than myself then those fears begin to come away from me. They weren't as intense as they had been. And they begin to get in the area where God intended for them to be. And at once I commenced to outgrow these fears.

You know we hear always about the promises on page 83-84. We never hear about the promises that are spread throughout the entire book. And I think one of the greatest promises to be found anywhere in the book is what Joe just read.

We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow that fear.

Now we can take these deep-seated fears just like deep-seated resentments. Through prayer on a daily basis, asking God to take this particular fear away from me, direct my attention to what he would have me be instead of that and at once I commence to outgrow that fear. And over a period of days as he directs my attention to what he would have me be and I try to be that, as I ask him to take that fear away, some morning I wake up and that fear is gone. It really, really does work. And I think the reason that it really works is that

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when we are asking God to take it away and direct our attention to what he would have us be, then that's one of the great expressions of courage and faith that we human beings can have.

Courage, faith and fear will not exist on the same plain

The fear will be replaced by the courage to do the opposite of that fear and as we begin to change it will be replaced by faith that God really can do these things. And slowly we can remove those fears too.

Now just think, this file cabinet up here in my head that was filled with fears has now been emptied out. That damaged and unsaleable goods called fear is gone at least to the level that God intends for it to be. Once again, God's not going to allow another hole in my head. The fears, if they disappear, they've got to be replaced with the opposite. And the opposite will be faith and courage, the opposite of the fear itself. I found out I didn't have to go to any other fellowships or read any other books to get faith and courage. If God dwells within me, that's always been a part of my makeup, I just never could use it before.

In my chase for money, power, prestige and sex and in my desire to fulfill the basic instincts of life, in my worries in that I wouldn't get what I want and I'd lose what I've got or they're going to catch me at it, faith and courage had to be repressed and I had to operate on that fear level. But now that the fear is gone, faith and courage automatically comes to the surface. Another positive happening. Two thirds of my store now has some peace of mind, serenity and happiness in them and I'm in much less chance of drinking now than I was before I started the inventory process. You see we don't have to wait till step 12 to get something good out of this. Every step brings a positive result. There's nothing negative about anything in our program, period.

Now also just like with a resentment, knowing that fears block you off from God, and that they might get you drunk, if you've got a fear that you don't want to turn loose of, you'd better look at it very, very closely. Because we can also use fear to rationalize and justify not doing something we really would like to do or just as importantly we can use it to justify continuing to do things that we know we shouldn't be doing. And if we've got one of those and we don't want to get rid of it, we'd better look at it very, very closely. Let me give you an example of how you can use fear to rationalize and justify.

How many of you here this morning, and please be truthful with me, how many of you would really like to go back to school and finish your education? Could I see your hands? Oh my God, about half of you at least. Now I'm going to ask you another question. How many of you really do intend to do that? Oh about half of those hands went up this time. I wonder why. Nothing in the world but fear.

Fear that we won't measure up.

Fear of failure.

Fear of hard work.

Actually keeps us from doing things that we really would like to do. Now if we can ask God to take that away and direct our attention to what he would have us be instead then every one of you that wants to go back to school will end up doing it. But until that fear is gone it's going to drive most of us away and keep us away. We use it to rationalize, justify just like we did with resentments. So if we've got one of those, let's look at that closely too.

All my life, I loved to work with my hands, all my life I wanted to be able to build a set of kitchen cabinets. Never would do it because I knew there would be a lot of mistakes, people would laugh and I would be embarrassed. Now after I worked the program for quite some time, one time I got the courage to build a set of kitchen cabinets. Now they don't look very good. There's a lot of mistakes and people laugh at it but I really don't give a damn. It don't bother me anymore see. So we can overcome these things with God's help. It's amazing what we can do with these things.

(Tape 6 - 00:44:01.1)

14 minutes