

Prayers of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous

Part 2 of 4

(Pages 44 - 88)

Prayer:

"Yet it is our great hope that all those who have as yet found no answer may begin to find one in the pages of this book and will presently join us on the high road to a new freedom." (page xxi)

"I earnestly advise every alcoholic to read this book through and through, and though perhaps he came to scoff, he may remain to pray."

William d. Silkworth, M.D.

Reader:

Forward to Second Edition page xx

"Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religious organization. Neither does A.A. take any particular medical point of view, though we cooperate widely with the men of medicine as well as with the men of religion."

"Alcohol being no respecter of persons, we are an accurate cross section of America, and in distant lands, the same democratic evening-up process is now going on. By personal religious affiliations, we include Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Hindus, and a sprinkling of Muslims and Buddhists."

Introduction:

Recap:

Define Prayer, types of prayer

Names for Higher power

We saw the Solution and that surrender (involves prayer) and communication with that Power was indeed action and a pillar of successful recovery.

Preface, Forwards: "We hope....:

Last week, we began with the introduction by outlining and defining words associated with Prayer. Today, we get into the real action of Prayers. It is no coincidence that we have a high volume of prayers in the "action chapters". Our founders foreshadow the surrender,

willingness and courage we alcoholics need to go on this journey of a lifetime and lifetime journey.

We Agnostics:

Page 46: "Our own conception, however inadequate, was sufficient to make the **approach** and to effect a **contact** with Him."

Page 46: "We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who **seek** Him."

Page 46: "To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad and roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who **earnestly seek**."

Page 47: "At the start, this was all we needed to commence spiritual growth, to effect our first **conscious relation** with God as we understood Him." (willingness)

Page 50: "Everyone of them has **gained access to**, and believes in, a Power greater than himself." (How? How do you gain access to your Higher Power?)

Page 56: "This man recounts that he tumbled out of bed **to his knees**. In a few seconds he was overwhelmed by a conviction of the Presence of God."

Page 56: "For the first time, he lived in **conscious companionship** with his Creator."

Page 57: "He **humbly offered** himself to his Maker – then he knew."

Page 57: "But He has come to all who have honestly **sought** Him."

Page 57: "When we **drew near** to Him, He disclosed Himself to us!"

Addressing many prejudices, objections to a spiritual life, to God.

(Page 49: "Instead of regarding ourselves as intelligent agents, spearheads of God's ever advancing Creation...") Attitude.

"Let's look at the record." Results

How it Works and Into Action: Most of the prayers are found in "How it Works" and "Into Action", this is not accidental or coincidental. That's where the work or our program is. Prayer is action – it's part of our work and how we approach this work.

Chapter 5: How it works

The Steps on the Wall

Page 59: “**We asked** His protection and care with complete abandon.”

Page 59: Step 5 “**Admitted** to God.” (prayer of confession)

Page 59: Step 7 “Humbly **asked** Him to remove our shortcomings.”

Page 59: Step 11 “**Sought** through prayer...**praying** only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

Page 60: (c) “That God could and would if He were **sought**.”

Story: **realizing (during one of Bill’s talks) I had only underlined the “me” parts, selfish demands...years...**

3rd Step Prayer

God, (who we are communicating with, building a relationship with)

“I offer myself to Thee – “

(Action? Surrender, all of me, what constitutes ‘ME’?) Attitude?

“To build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt”.

(Why? What does that mean? God is in charge of our life) How many times have you said “I’m going this way, and life and God said, uh, no actually, you’re going here)
Story: I thought my life would be different...

“Relieve me of the bondage of self,” (use as prayer to remind self...when I start to get irritated or some negative emotion)

Bondage? Page 62 Selfishness. self-centeredness, Self-delusion, self-seeking and self-pity. The bondage of self...

“that I may better do Thy will.”

We are asking to have ‘bondage of self’ removed not for us, though we benefit greatly from this freedom, but so we can do God’s will, live this spiritual life.

“Take away my difficulties” (why?) that victory over them may **bear witness to those I would help** of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of Life.

Be an example of this” design for living” to others, women I sponsor. **Stories:** Christmas and Butterfly’s and service work.

May I do Thy will always!” (this is prayer all on its own)

Page 63: "But it is better to meet God alone than with one who might misunderstand. **The wording was, of course quite optional so long as we express the idea, voicing it without reservation.**" (I am rather a purist about step 3 being taken as directed from BB vs other ways that have become popular this past decade, ie; in front of group.) Even Christ said to pray alone and not in front of other men touting your ego.

4th Step Prayer

Page 67: "We **asked** God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend." (our attitude, perception)

When a person offended, we said to ourselves, "This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? **"God, save me from being angry. Thy will be done."** (again, I state God, save me from being angry...as mantra in difficult situations.)

Fear Prayer:

Page 68 "We **ask** Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be." Result/Promise: "At once, we commence to outgrow fear."

Sex/Relations Prayer

Page 69: "We **asked** God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them."

"In meditation, we **ask** God what we should do about each specific matter.

Page 70: We **earnestly pray** for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing."

Chapter 6: Into Action

Now there is no call to prayer or a prayer noted for Step 5 as discussed in pages 72-75, however when we read the actual Step: "Admitted to God...:" that is a prayer of confession. Also, I know every 5th Step I have done, I have prayed for Honesty and willingness. Every 5th Step I've taken another woman through, I pray. Even every phone call, "God calling"

Wrapping up step 5

Page 75: "**We thank** God from the bottom of our heart that we know him better." How do we know God better after the 5th? We have come face to face with self. See 5th Step Promises.

Story: Had to call Bill.

Step 6

Page 76: "if we still cling to something we will not let go, **we ask** God to help us be willing." (a life - long prayer...)

7th Step Prayer (surrendering again – after 4th and 5th, we now know some of the truth as to who and what we are)

My Creator, (who?)

I am now willing that you have all of me, good and bad. (another surrender)

(Context: having just finished 4-6, starkly acquainted with Self and it's manifestations. But where have we looked at our good? What assets do we have?)

I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character **which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows.**

(again as in Step 3, surrender and now we add the good. Service - asking that the defects, obstacles that are blocking us from my usefulness to God and others be removed)

Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen

Praying for strength to live this "design for living". Prayer for strength for any of your undertakings; Steps, work, new situation, etc.)

Step 8 & 9

Page 76: "if we haven't the will to do this, **we ask** until it comes.

Page 79: Step 9 "**We ask** that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences may be."

Page 80: "If we have obtained permission, have consulted with others, **asked** God to help and the drastic step is indicated we must not shrink."

Page 80: "He saw that he had to place the outcome in God's hands or he would soon start drinking again, and all would be lost anyway."

Page 81: "We are sorry for what we have done, and **God willing**, it shall not be repeated."

Page 82: "Each might **pray** about it, having the other one's happiness uppermost in mind."

Page 83: "So we clean house with the family, **asking** each morning in meditation that our Creator show us the way of patience, tolerance, kindness and love."

The Spiritual life is not a theory. We have to live it.