

“... God is everything or else He is nothing ... what was our choice to be?”

**A two-part Big Book study of this most important question.
December 22 and 29, 2023, 10 am ct on Threads of Recovery.
Facilitator: Bill H., St. Louis, Mo. USA**

(All page numbers from Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition, unless otherwise noted.)

“When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self-imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn’t. What was our choice to be?” (p. 53)

“We have no desire to convince anyone that there is only one way by which faith can be acquired. If what we have learned and felt and seen means anything at all, it means that all of us, whatever our race, creed, or color are the children of a living Creator *with whom we may form a relationship upon simple and understandable terms as soon as we are willing and honest enough to try.*” (Italics mine) (p. 28)

“Further on, clear-cut directions are given showing how we have recovered.”
“... the way he established his relationship with God.” (p. 29)

“We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a *Power greater than ourselves* ... find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.” (p. 45)

“Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles.”
“... alcoholic ... self-will run riot ... thought he usually doesn’t think so.” (p. 62)

Do the Twelve Steps guide me to decide “God is”, and further, that “God is everything”?

Step One.

When I admit I am powerless, I am actually more desperate than before. I begin to hope that there is some power outside of me that can help me. Driven by this sober *desperation*, I develop a slight desire to consider the possibility that “God is”.

Step Two.

As a newcomer, I spend time in meetings and the Fellowship with men and women who speak and act differently, better than they were. They say a Power greater than themselves helps them not take the first drink; to live sober and reasonably content without alcohol. I experience a “borrowed hope”. I borrow their hope that a Power greater than me may be available to help me, as well. *From my desperation is born a desire to believe that “God is”.*

Step Three.

I decide to risk it—to give the caring God of others a chance. I decide to ask God, as I understand God, to relieve me of the bondage of self. I don’t know yet if God is “everything”. I do know that to *understand God*, I don’t have to explain, predict or limit God. From my desperation, I take the risk to hope that *God has more power than me on my own!*

Step Four.

I am willing to consider that there may be some things in me blocking me from seeking and receiving God’s help. I write a “searching and fearless moral inventory”. I ask God for help with my resentments (anger), my fears and my selfish, inconsiderate treatment of others. I let go of my doubt. *As I ask God for help, my belief in God’s existence unexplainably grows.*

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Step Five.

I discover some truth about my resentments, fears and inconsiderate treatment of others. I become willing to share this information with a person I trust. Without understanding it, I feel different. I feel “lighter”, less angry, less afraid. I see where giving other people some consideration is a healthy thing, not a weakness or a threat. I do not realize it yet, but a *caring God is working inside me. I am having a spiritual experience. My inner spirit has “awakened”.*

Step Six.

I admit certain character defects are now objectionable to me. These objectionable parts of my personality block me from God’s care. They harm me and my relationship with others. Yet, I cannot stop doing them on my own. I need God to help me learn to live without them, just as I did with alcohol. I am *willing to believe that “God is” real—here ... to help me.*

Step Seven.

I ask God for the willingness to let God “have all of me”. I ask God for “strength, as I go out from here, to do [God’s] bidding”. *I am giving God a chance to be “everything” or “nothing”.*

Step Eight.

I ask God for the willingness to list all persons I have harmed and to be responsible for my wrongs. *I trust God to “be enough”, to help me honestly accept my responsibility.*

Step Nine.

I ask God for the willingness to be accountable to each person for my wrongs and to amend the harms I’ve done. *I trust God to “be everything”, to free me from pride and fear.*

Step Ten.

I continue to ask God to help me throughout each day to watch for and deal with my selfishness, dishonesty, resentments and fears. My spiritual life grows each time I ask God for help. *I trust my caring God to “be everything”—to help me deal with everything and everyone.*

Step Eleven.

I seek God’s presence in my life from awakening in the morning to retiring at night. I ask God to help me know Gods’ will and for the Power to do God’s will. *I trust my caring God to guide me in everything, even my motives. I have come to believe that “God is everything”.*

Step Twelve.

With God’s help, I try to “carry the message” of my spiritual awakening to other alcoholics today. With God’s help, I try to practice the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps in each one of my relationships and with every person I am with today. I say “God help me with this” and “God help me with him” and “God help me with her” dozens of times each day. *For me, it is safer and saner to live each day as if “God is everything”. There is no downside!*

“The age of miracles is still with us. Our own recovery proves that!”

(p. 153)