THE NIGHT CAP

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THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Lord, God of hosts, I come to Thee
In solemn deep humility
to offer with sincerity
My praise.

Yet, quite beyond the many score
Of blessings that I'm thankful for,
I need Thy help to mend the more
My ways.

Of ttimes in lone soliloquy
I pondereth in reverie
And doubt that I have given Thee
Return

In payment for the debt I owe
That Thou elected to bestow
On me the gift of life, and so
I yearn

For wisdom and the will to do;
And live the way Thee wants me to;
Thine every teaching I'd pursue,
And then

Thy wav'ring faith I would restore,
Teach me to heed Thy pleasure more,
'Tis this I'd be most thankful for,
Amen!

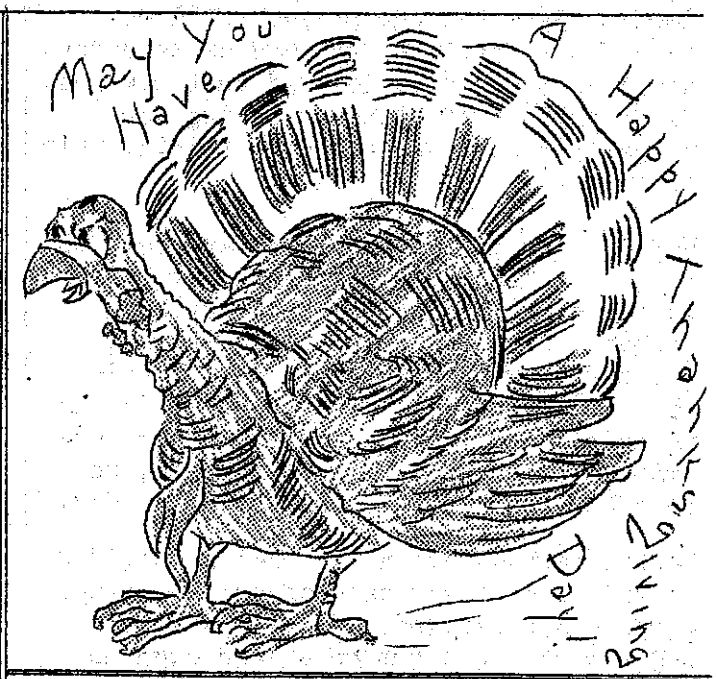
- - - Dale T. Allen.

AN INTERPRETATION OF THE TWELVE STEPS

Step No. 11 - Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out.

When we first started trying to follow the program of Alcolholics Anonymous as outlined in these twelve steps, we hadn't the remotest notion what we'd do when, and if, we ever arrived at the serious contemplation of this step as applied to ourself, for we hadn't

(Continued on Page 2.)



LET GOD CONTROL YOUR CONSCIENCE

Shortly after Albert Einstein discovered the law of relativity, someone asked that great soul how he did it. His simple answer was, "I challenged an axiom." I want to challenge a well known axiom that has come to be accepted by too many of us; one that is dangerous to character if accepted at face value. That axiom is the well known, "Let your conscience be your guide." I will accept that axiom on one condition. That is that you let God control your conscience. Then and only then is conscience a safe guide.

How often we hear this fallacious remark made by decent people. Someone asks, "Should I do this thing that I am about to do?" A friend will say "Let your conscience be your guide." I submit that conscience will guide you to disaster often if it is not constantly under the scrutiny of the merciful eyes of God. History has validated this fact over and over again

There was a time when slavery was the accepted practice in America. Some of the

(Continued on Page 3.)

AN INTERPRETATION OF THE TWELVE STEPS
(Continued - Page One)

prayed or meditated prayerfully for many a long year.

But we have learned to pray and what's more important, we have come to believe, implicitly, that our prayers will receive consideration from God as we understand God. We have learned that our previous selfish thinking or asking for things for self was not even faintly akin to prayer.

Now, we ask God as we understand God, to help us through the immediate day before us without taking a drink of anything containing alcohol. As we go through the day we remember to ask Him to help us whenever we get "off the beam" in our thinking, and when we arrive at our bedside at night in a sober condition, we remember to thank Him for the sober day.

Normal people have a day that is divided roughly into three categories: Sleeping, working and playing. Equally divided there would be eight hours for each of these. We set aside a time at the end of each workday for this prayerful meditation and, as suggested in Step 10: "Continued to take personal inventory." We go over the events of the day, analytically, and take note of the errors made which could have been avoided, retrospectively, so that we won't make them again, and admit the wrong things we have said and done that sometimes call for going to people and mentioning the fact that we were wrong and making the necessary overtures toward a better relationship with those people.

A man that said a prayer in a certain garden nearly two centuries ago, taught us to pray for "knowledge of His will for us." He was the first man ever recorded as praying for this knowledge. Prior to that time, it had been the custom for people to bargain with their gods. They would, in effect, say, "God, if you'll get me out of this, I'll do so and so for you."

Ironically, that was our own pattern until we learned to pray after studying the AA program. Now, all we want is to stay sober from day to day, help others stay sober and help others learn, in turn, pray for their own knowledge of His

DIRECTORY OF A A ACTIVITIES

Call F-2523 for information of any AA activity in San Antonio and Southwest Texas.

MONDAY

State Hospital, Industrial, Terrell Hills, and Professional.

TUESDAY

City-wide meeting in West Wing of Municipal Auditorium, 8 P.M., under sponsorship of San Antonio Central Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous. Open to Public.
Women's group meets at 6:30 P.M. at 614 Avenue E.

WEDNESDAY

Highland Park - Collins Gardens

THURSDAY

Olmos Park, Earl, Industrial and Fulton Center Groups.

FRIDAY

Downtown and Club Twelve Groups. Family Groups meet at same time and places.

SATURDAY

Industrial Group, 614 Avenue E. Open to public.

SUNDAY

Downtown, 4:30 P.M. Industrial, 8 P. M.

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CORPUS CHRISTI

Downtown Group meets at Civic Center Tuesday; Open. Friday, Closed.
Family Group meets Friday.
Club 10 meets at 146 Tompkins Street. - Monday closed. Friday open.
Family group meets Monday.
Alano Group meets at 607 Kinney Street. - Monday closed. Friday open.
Family Group meets Monday.

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AUSTIN

Austin Group meets at 608 No. Seventh St. Tuesday open; Thursday State Hospital. Friday Closed. - Sunday closed.
Family Group meets Friday.

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HONDO

Seco Club meets at DeMontel Hall Saturdays at 8 P. M.
Mail P. O. Box 338. Phone Day 25; Night, 353 - J.

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best people on our great country owned slaves and felt no compunction of conscience about buying and selling human life. They let their conscience be their guide. But there came a time when this practice was abolished in America and today we feel that slavery was morally wrong. What happened? Well, a group of people began to let God control their consciences. They heard Christ say that "One is your Father and all men are brothers." That helped to re-educate their consciences.

Let us take another example. Once, polygamy was the accepted practice in the human family. A man would have a dozen wives and felt no compunction of conscience about it. He let his conscience be his guide, and that is where it led him. But there came a time when polygamy was abolished and condemned as a sin against the creator and against womanhood. What happened? A small group of people began to let the light of the knowledge of God control their consciences. They learned from Him that "marriage was a sacred vow to be entered into by one man and one woman; that the twain shall become one flesh."

Beloved, there are still many evil practices rampant in our world today because we have let our consciences be our guides, rather than letting God control our consciences. If we let Him control, we cannot mistake the way we should go.

There are hungry people in our world today that will starve unless you and I share what we have with them. If we let our pagan consciences guide us, we will say, "Charity begins at home. I have only enough for myself and my family." If we let God control our consciences we will hear Christ say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." If God controls your conscience, you will feed the hungry where you find them.

Let us bring this down to our door steps. How can we know when it is safe to let conscience guide us? The answer is, "When God is in control."

The Syndicate of Hashish Smugglers, Traders and Smokers recently wrote letters to Cairo, Egypt's, newspapers protesting the Egyptian government's ban on the drug. The syndicate, which has been an underground operation for over 30 years, declared: "Hashish is less harmful than whiskey. Whiskey drives one crazy, while hashish merely makes one happy."

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Year: Clara B., Otho H., Bob H., Homer K.
3 Years: Arthur G.
4 Years: Norval M.
5 Years: Mack C., John D., Stanley D.
6 Years: Ivan D.
7 Years: Frank F., Harry F.

According to the United States Department of Commerce, Americans spent $9,150,000,000 on liquor, beer and wine in 1951. Breaking it down to statistics, that amounted to approximately $59.80 for every man, woman and child in the country. Beer was the heavy favority with whiskey running second and wine in third place. Twenty billion dollars was spent in the same year for clothing and shoes. That's about twice as much for dress. Must be a bunch of panty-waist drinkers around the country!

Another group of AA was organized in San Antonio on October 6. It is called the Terrell Hills Group and started in business with 14 members. Meetings are at 8 p.m. Mondays at 335 Geneseo Road.

Doc reminded us that the S. A. Central Office of AA passed its third birthday on Sept. 10, "quietly, in meditation and not unmindful of responsibility."

It is amazing how much God can accomplish though an imperfect person who has put all his imperfections completely at God's disposal.
- Christian Advocate

Nearly two thousand years have come and gone. Good men have lived and died, and great systems of philosophy and ethics have been wrought out, but the world has never gotten beyond Jesus. His life is still the high water mark of morals and religion. It has been His light that has shone in our lives and showed up the dark corners. Let His light shine in your life today, and He will make your conscience a safe guide. Let God control your conscience.

- - Rev. W. Earl Waldrop

A. A. IN ACTION

Walter Payne, one of the most beloved members of San Antonio AA, died at his home Friday, Oct. 3, 1952, after a lingering illness. He was buried from St.Mark's Episcopal Church, Monday, October 6.

Bishop Everett Jones and Rev. Harold Gosnell officiated at the services. Walter is survived by his widow, Alice Payne, and a son, Stanley, who is attending Tulane University in New Orleans. Pallbearers were members of AA. Walter will be sorely missed by many who enjoyed his company. We all offer our deepest sympathy to "those who are left behind."

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Dr. Joe M. was called by Uncle Sam to take a physical examination to see if he's fit for military service. Joe hasn't heard anything yet, but is preparing to sell his home and wind up his business in San Antonio so that he'll be entirely ready to have Uncle remove him from private practice.

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Dr. "Chick" DeH. also had a summons from Uncle to take his physical.

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Dorothea C. still in Baptist Memorial Hospital at press time.

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Met Earl and Lorena A at a party Saturday, October 15. Earl is looking good and says he feels wonderful, having lost about 20 pounds off his waistline. Lorena says her arm, which she broke a few months back, is okay.

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Industrial Group, 614 Avenue E, has been having some mighty good speakers at its Saturday night meetings lately. Its Board of Governors declares that it has many more good ones lined up for the immediate future. If you miss these meetings, it's your loss.

THE TEST

A psychiatrist, endeavoring to give 3 waiting patients a quick objective reaction test, tossed a handkerchief into the air and let it settle slowly to the floor. Turning to the patients, he asked:

"What does that make you think of?"

1st patient: It reminds me of tall, rugged mountains with snow-capped peaks.

2nd patient: It makes me think of white spray of a waterfall by the sea.

3rd patient: It makes me think of whisky.

Psychiatrist: Now why does that make you think of whiskey?

3rd patient: Because whiskey's all I ever think of anyway.

HERE ARE THE STEPS WE TOOK, WHICH ARE SUGGESTED AS A PROGRAM OF RECOVERY. . .

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and practice these principles in all our affairs.

The teacher was explaining to her class how Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt when she looked back. "My mother," interrupted Jimmy triumphantly, "was out driving the other day when she looked back and she turned into a telephone pole."

What actually happens seldom bothers us as much as what we think might happen.

A man who is too big for a small job is too small for a big job.

HOW WILL YOU KNOW ?

One night in a meeting a member asked this question, "How will I be able to tell when I have a spiritual experience, or when I have had a spiritual awakening." It seems to me we hear very very much about the penalty of intoxication, but we never seem to hear enough about the spiritual reward of sobriety. To me sobriety goes hand in hand with faith, and faith is the fourth dimension of progress. While it is unseen it is a definite force that one day should bind mankind together into a single unit of thought and action. I believe that no man is born with faith -- faith is an acquired virtue. Faith in the future is based on the mistakes of the past; faith is the substance of things for which we hope -- faith is the evidence of things unseen.

In the beginning, when an individual joins AA, he thinks he does so for his own benefit -- and so he does -- in the beginning. But as he continues to attend the meetings he comes to realize that he is being separated from self, and from selfish purpose. He begins to take an interest in the lives and welfare of his fellow men, and in the fellowship as a whole. He has learned to be tolerant of the shortcomings, the ideas and the peculiarities of his fellow man, which means that he has become aware of the reality and the availability of God. Through the practice of self-abnegation, he has discovered the Kingdom of God within himself. In short, he has had his spiritual experience, and he has become able to commune with God as he understands Him.

Through faith he knows that if we are judged in our final day, and found wanting - - that if we have left no good mark upon the Book of Life, then we shall pass on to the realms of those unmourned and forgotten . . . .

F.G. -Stillwater AA Grp.

A A HIGHLIGHTS

Bill's first day of ~~continuous~~ sobriety: December 11, 1934.

Bill met Dr. Bob: Mother's Day, 1935.

Dr. Bob's first day of ~~continuous~~ sobriety: June 10, 1935.

First AA hospitalized: ~~City Hospital~~, Akron, Ohio, 1935.

First AA Group: Akron, 1936.

First plans for AA movement begun: Fall, 1937.

Twelve Steps written: ~~182 Clinton St.~~, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1938.

Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, published April, 1939.

Rockefeller Dinner: Union Club, New York City, February 18, 1940.

First AA Clubhouse: New York City, June 18, 1940. First foreign AA Group: Australia, 1942. First AA publication: Central Bulletin, Cleveland, Sept,'42. First religious hospital open to AA: St. Thomas, Akron, 1942. First issue of The AA Grapevine, June, 1944. First hospital plan: Knickerbocker Hospital, NYC, April, 1945. First National Anniversary: 10th at Cleveland, June 10,1945. First Draft of 12 Traditions of AA: Published Grapevine, April, 1946. First Draft of Short Form Traditions, November 1949. Anne Smith died: June 1,1949. First International Conference: July, 1950 Dr. Bob died: November 16,1950 at City Hospital, Akron. The First Memorial Issue of Grapevine dedicated to Dr. Bob, Jan. 1951. First General Serv.Conf. Apr, '51, NYC. THE LASKER AWARD - October 30, 1951.

High up in the Rockies there lived a small boy and his mother. One day after he had been punished severely, the lad ran to the edge of the precipice and shouted back at his mother, "I hate you, I hate you." Across the ravine came the echo, "I hate you, I hate you."

Thoroughly frightened, the boy ran back to his mother and sobbed, "Who is that bad man over there who shouted 'I hate you'?"

Taking the boy's hand, the mother led him back to the edge of the precipice. "Now sonny," she said, "call out 'I love you, I love you'." The little boy did as he was told. Clearly and sweetly the echo came back, repeating the words.

"My child," the mother said, taking him into her arms, "that is the law of life -- what you give, you get."