

Jesus's Sermon on the Mount

By Dick B.

(The Parts Dr. Bob Considered "Absolutely Essential")

A.A.'s Bible roots are as numerous and varied as the A.A. sources that used them. If you start with the Bible devotionals in wide use by A.A.'s oldtimers, you'll see lots of mention of all the Bible verses, chapters, and books we'll discuss. Key among those devotionals were *The Upper Room*, *The Runner's Bible*, and *My Utmost For His Highest*.

If you start with the books Dr. Bob's wife Anne recommended and shared from her journal with early AAs and their families, you will find Anne recommending the Book of Acts, Psalms, Proverbs, and other specific sections. She also recommends Fosdick's book on *The Meaning of Prayer*, which is filled with Bible references pertaining to prayer. She recommends several books on the life of Jesus Christ which, also, are filled with Bible references. She recommends life-changing books by Sam Shoemaker and others, and these spell out appropriate Bible sources for the very spiritual ideas Rev. Shoemaker was teaching early AAs. So too with the Glenn Clark books and E. Stanley Jones books.

If you start with some of the books Dr. Bob recommended, you'll be looking at *The Greatest Thing in the World* by Drummond, which discusses 1 Corinthians 13. You'll look at several books on Matthew 5-7 (the sermon on the mount delivered by Jesus). These include books by Oswald Chambers, Glenn Clark, E. Stanley Jones, Emmet Fox, and others. Most of those authors discuss almost every single verse in the sermon. Though there is no commentary on the Book of James, *The Runner's Bible* (which Dr. Bob widely recommended) discusses many parts many portions of James, which is the book Anne frequently read to Bob and Bill at the Smith home in the summer of 1935. The many books by Rev. Sam Shoemaker, Oxford Group writers, new thought writers, and others such as Kagawa all became rich sources for the simple ideas AAs extracted from the Good Book and incorporated into their spiritual program of recovery. That program, of course, involved intensive work with newcomers, prayer, Bible study, and being in frequent, daily fellowship with like-minded believers..

In this segment, the focus will be on the three portions of the Bible which Dr. Bob said he and the early A.A. pioneers considered "absolutely essential." Here are some of the pioneer comments about those three segments (Matthew 5-7, the Book of James, and 1 Corinthians 13):

When we started in on Bill D. [who was A.A. Number Three], we had no Twelve Steps [said Dr. Bob]. . . But we were convinced that the answer to our problems was in the Good Book. To some of us older ones, the parts that we found absolutely essential were the Sermon on the Mount, the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and the Book of James (*The Co-founders of Alcoholics Anonymous: Biographical sketches Their last major talks*. New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 1972, 1975, pp. 9-10)

Members of Alcoholics Anonymous begin the day with a prayer for strength and a short period of Bible reading. They find the basic messages they need in the Sermon on the Mount, in Corinthians and the Book of James [said Dr. Bob] (Wally P., *But for the Grace of God*, p. 45).

Before there was a Big Book—in the period of “flying blind,” God’s Big Book was the reference used in our home [said Dr. Bob’s son, Smitty]. The summer of 1935, when Bill lived with us, Dr. Bob had read the Bible completely three times. And the references that seemed consistent with the program goals were the Sermon on the Mount, 1 Corinthians 13, and the Book of James (Dick B., *The Good Book and The Big Book*, p. ix).

There is the Bible that you haven’t opened for years. Get acquainted with it. Read it with an open mind. You will find things that will amaze you. You will be convinced that certain passages were written with you in mind. Read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew V, VI, and VII). Read St. Paul’s inspired essay on love (I Corinthians XIII). Read the Book of James. Read the Twenty-third and Ninety-first Psalms. These readings are brief but so important (*A Manual for Alcoholics Anonymous*, 6th rev. ed. Akron, Ohio, AA of Akron, 1989, p. 8).

Each morning there was devotion [said Bill Wilson]. After the long silence Anne [Dr. Bob’s wife] would read out of the Good Book. James was our favorite (*RHS*. New York: The AA Grapevine, Inc., 1951, p. 5).

I sort of always felt that something was lost from A.A. when we stopped emphasizing morning meditation [said Bill Wilson] (*DR. BOB and the Good Oldtimers*, New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 1980, p. 178).

We much favored the Apostle James. The definition of live in Corinthians also played a great part in our discussions, [said Bill Wilson] (Kurtz, *Not-God*. Hazelden, 1991, p. 320, n. 11).

I learned a great deal from you people [said Bill Wilson in December 12, 1954 interview of T. Henry and Clarace Williams], from the Smiths themselves, and from Henrietta [Seiberling]. I hadn’t looked in the Bible, up to this time, at all [referring to the meetings and conversations in the summer of 1935] (Dick B., *The Akron Genesis*, p. 64).

The Sermon on the Mount [Matthew Chapters 5 - 7] contains the underlying spiritual philosophy of A.A. [said both Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob] (Dick B., *The Good Book and The Big Book*, p. 4). The key Bible segments most frequently mentioned in connection with the essentials used to put the pioneer program of recovery together, then, were the Sermon, James, and Corinthians. And we believe any study of A.A. history, A.A. principles, A.A. literature, and the A.A. fellowship requires a knowledge of what the early AAs took from the three key Bible sources. You will no doubt see how the various segments of those particular Biblical materials seem quite clearly to have influenced or found their way into the Big Book and the Twelve Steps. We think those materials so important that they justify a separate item-by-item review at this point.

The Sermon on the Mount

Our discussion here will not deal with this or that commentary on Matthew Chapters 5-7. It will focus on the Sermon on the Mount itself; for this Sermon which Jesus delivered was not the property of some particular writer. The fact that Dr. Bob read the Matthew chapters *themselves* as well as the many interpretations of them seems to verify an A.A. belief that the Sermon itself is one of the principles comprising “the common property of mankind,” which Bill Wilson said the AAs had borrowed. And we will now review some major points that appear to have found their

way from the Sermon into the thinking behind the Big Book. The places where the pioneers found these points mentioned were, of course, in the sermon itself. In addition, the many materials early AAs read, and which contained the sermon items, are thoroughly documented in *The Good Book and The Big Book*.

The Lord's Prayer—Matthew 6:9-13

Oxford Group meetings closed with the Lord's Prayer—in New York and in Akron. The author has attended at least two thousand A.A. meetings, and almost every one has closed with the Lord's Prayer. At the 1990 International A.A. Conference in Seattle, which this author attended, some 50,000 members of Alcoholics Anonymous joined in closing their meetings with the Lord's Prayer. The question here concerns what parts, if any, of the Lord's Prayer found their way into the Big Book, Steps, Slogans, and fellowship; and we do point out here that the prayer is *part of the Sermon on the Mount*.

Here are the verses of the Lord's Prayer (King James Version) as found in Matthew 6:9-13. Jesus instructed the Judaeans, “After this manner therefore pray ye”:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Dr. Bob studied commentaries on the Sermon by Oswald Chambers, Glenn Clark, Emmet Fox, and E. Stanley Jones. And these writers extracted a good many teachings, prayer guides, and theological ideas from the Lord's Prayer verses in the Sermon. But there are a few concepts and phrases in the Lord's Prayer which either epitomize A.A. thinking or can be found in its language—whether the A.A. traces came from the Lord's Prayer itself or from other portions of the Bible.

The Big Book uses the word “Father” when referring to God; and the context of the usage shows that the name came from the Bible. The Oxford Group also used the term “Father,” among other names, when referring to God. The concept and expression of God as “Father” is not confined to the Sermon on the Mount. It can be found in many other parts of the New Testament. But AAs have given the “Our Father” prayer a special place in their meetings. So the Lord's Prayer seems the likely source of their use of the word “Father.”

The phrase “Thy will be done” is directly quoted in the Big Book and underlies A.A.'s contrast between “self-will” and “God's will.” The Oxford Group stressed, as do A.A.'s Third and Seventh Step prayers, that there must be a *decision to do God's will and to surrender to His will*. These ideas were often symbolized in the A.A. prayer, “Thy will be done.”

Finally, “Forgive us our debts” or “trespasses” clearly implies that God can and will “forgive;” and these concepts can be found in the Big Book, whether they came from the Lord's prayer or from other Biblical sources such as the Book of James.

The Full Sermon on the Mount—Matthew Chapters 5-7

Dr. Bob studied a book by E. Stanley Jones, which outlined the Sermon's contents in this fashion:

1. The goal of life: To be perfect or complete as the Father in heaven is perfect or complete (5:48) with twenty-seven marks of this perfect life (5:1-47).
2. A diagnosis of the reason why men do not reach or move on to that goal: Divided personality (6:1-6; 7:1-6).
3. The Divine offer of an adequate moral and spiritual re-enforcement so that men can move on to that goal: The Holy Spirit to them that ask him (7:7-11).
4. After making the Divine offer he gathers up and emphasizes in two sentences our part in reaching that goal. Toward others—we are to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us (7:12); toward ourselves—we are to lose ourselves by entering the straight gate (7:13).
5. The test of whether we are moving on to that goal, or whether this Divine Life is operative within us: By their fruits (7:15-23).
6. The survival value of this new life and the lack of survival value of life lived in any other way: The house founded on rock and the house founded on sand (7:24-27).

We will review Jesus's Sermon chapter by chapter to locate some principal thoughts that Dr. Bob and Bill may have had in mind when they each said A.A. embodied the philosophy of the Sermon.

Matthew Chapter 5

1. *The Beatitudes*. The *Beatitudes* are found in Matthew 5:3-11. The word “beatitudes” refers to the first word “Blessed” in each of these verses. Merriam-Webster's says “blessed” means “enjoying the bliss of heaven.” The word in the Greek New Testament from which “blessed” was translated means, “happy,” according Biblical scholar Ethelbert Bullinger. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* explains the word “blessed” as follows: “In the beatitudes the Lord indicates not only the characters that are blessed, but the nature of that which is the highest good.” Dr. Bob's wife Anne Smith described the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount as “the Christ-like virtues to be cultivated” (Dick B., *Anne Smith's Journal*, p. 135).

We have italicized Webster's definitions for the key words in each “beatitude” verse, quoting also the King James Version, which was the version Dr. Bob and early AAs most used. As the verses appear, they say: “Blessed” are: (v. 3) the poor (*humble*) in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; (v. 4) they that mourn (*feel or express grief or sorrow*): for they shall be comforted; (v. 5) the meek (*enduring injury with patience and without resentment*); for they shall inherit the earth; (v. 6) they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness (*acting in accord with divine or*

moral law): for they shall be filled; (v. 7) the merciful (*compassionate*): for they shall obtain mercy; (v. 8) the pure (*spotless, stainless*) in heart: for they shall see God; (v. 9) the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God; (v. 10) they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; (v. 11) ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake (*end or purpose*): for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Did Dr. Bob, Anne, Bill, or Henrietta Seiberling study and draw on these Beatitude verses for A.A.'s recovery program purposes? We can't document an answer. But we do see some ideas common to A.A.'s spiritual principles in the foregoing ideas: (1) Humility; (2) Comfort for the suffering; (3) Patience and tolerance to the end of eliminating resentment; (4) Harmonizing actions with God's will; (5) Compassion, which Webster defines as "sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate;" (6) "Cleaning house;" (7) Making peace; (8) Standing for and acting upon spiritual principles because they are God's principles, whatever the cost. The foregoing Twelve Step ideas can be found in the Beatitudes; and A.A. founders probably saw them too.

2. *Letting your light shine*. Matthew 5:13-16 suggest glorifying your Heavenly Father by letting others *see* your good works. That is, "Letting your light shine" does not mean glorifying yourself, but rather glorifying God by letting others see the spiritual walk in action—see the immediate results of surrender to the Master. These ideas may be reflected in the Big Book's statement: "Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God . . ." (p. 77).

3. *Obedying the Ten Commandments*. In Matthew 5:17-21, Jesus reiterates the importance obeying the law and the prophet, specifically referring to Exodus 20:13 {Thou shalt not kill), but clearly referring to the other important commandments such as having no other god but Jehovah (Exodus 20:2-3), worshiping no other god (Exodus 20:4-5), not committing adultery (Exodus 20:14), not stealing (Exodus 20:15), and so on. And wherever these commandments may have fallen between the cracks in today's A.A., they very clearly governed the moral standards of early A.A. that Dr. Bob and the Akron AAs shot for. The Ten Commandments were part of early A.A. pamphlets and literature, and Dr. Bob and the Akron AAs would have nothing to do with a man who was committing adultery.

4. *The Law of Love in action*. In Matthew 5:17-47, Jesus confirms that the Law of Love fulfills the Old Testament Law. He rejects anger without cause, unresolved wrongs to a brother, quibbling with an adversary, lust and impurity, adultery, retaliation, and hatred of an enemy. Our title *The Oxford Group & Alcoholics Anonymous* covers many of these ideas as roots of A.A. principles. And the foregoing verses in Matthew 5 may very well have influenced A.A. language about: (1) Overcoming resentments; (2) Making restitution; (3) Avoidance of retaliation for wrongdoing by others; and (4) Making peace with our enemies.

Matthew Chapter 6

1. *Anonymity*. Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18, dealing with almsgiving "in secret," praying "in secret," fasting "in secret," avoidance of "vain repetitions," and hypocrisy very possibly played a role in the development of A.A.'s spiritual principle of anonymity. Jesus said, "your Father knoweth

what things ye have need of, before ye ask him” and “thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.” The vain practices Jesus condemned focused on inflation of ego and self—something A.A. disdains. We have located no direct tie between the teachings of Jesus on anonymity and A.A.'s traditions on this spiritual principle. But the concepts are parallel; and *The Runner's Bible* and other A.A. biblical sources discuss their significance at some length.

2. *Forgiveness*. Matthew 6:14-15 stressed forgiving men their trespasses; and Emmet Fox's forceful writing about these verses may well have influenced the A.A. amends process. Fox said:

The forgiveness of sins is the central problem of life. . . . It is, of course, rooted in selfishness. . . . We must positively and definitely extend forgiveness to everyone to whom it is possible that we can owe forgiveness, namely, to anyone who we think can have injured us in any way. . . . When you hold resentment against anyone, you are bound to that person by a cosmic link, a real, tough metal chain. You are tied by a cosmic tie to the thing that you hate. The one person perhaps in the whole world whom you most dislike is the very one to whom you are attaching yourself by a hook that is stronger than steel (Fox, *The Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 183-88).

Did Fox's writing on this point influence the Big Book's emphasis on forgiveness? We do not know. But at least two writers on A.A. history have claimed that Fox's writings influenced Bill Wilson. Other writers that were read by AAs used language similar to that used by Fox in his discussion of forgiveness of enemies. And the Sermon on the Mount is not the only place in the New Testament where forgiveness is stressed. Thus, after Christ had accomplished remission of past sins, Paul wrote in Colossians 3:13:

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do ye*.

Henrietta Seiberling taught her children 1 John 4:20:

If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.

In any event, the Big Book states at page 77: The question of how to approach the man we hated will arise. It may be he has done us more harm than we have done him and, though we may have acquired a better attitude toward him, we are still not too keen about admitting our faults. Nevertheless, with a person we dislike, we take the bit in our teeth. It is harder to go to an enemy than to a friend, but we find it more beneficial to us. We go to him in a helpful *and forgiving spirit*, confessing our former ill feeling and expressing our regret. Under no condition do we criticize such a person or argue. Simply we tell him

that we will never get over drinking until we have done our utmost to straighten out the past (*italics added*).

3. *The “sunlight of the Spirit?”* Speaking of the futility and unhappiness in a life which includes deep resentment, the Big Book states: “when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit.” One often hears this “sunlight” expression quoted in A.A. meetings. Yet its origins seem unreported and undocumented. Anne Smith referred frequently in her journal to the verses in 1 John which had to do with fellowship with God and walking in the light

as God is light. So did A.A.'s Oxford Group sources. And the following are the most frequently quoted verses from 1 John having to do with God as “light” and the importance of walking in the light to have fellowship with Him:

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:3-7).

We are dealing, in this portion, with the Sermon on the Mount. But we also mention the foregoing verses from 1 John 1:3-7 (having to do with walking in God's light as against walking in darkness). We believe the ideas in 1 John, together with the following verses in the Sermon, may possibly have given rise to Bill's references to the alcoholic's being blocked from the “sunlight of the Spirit” when he or she dwells in such dark realms as excessive anger. Matthew 6:22-24 state:

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

4. *Seek ye first the kingdom of God.* Matthew 6:24-34 seem to have had tremendous influence on A.A. The substance of these verses is that man will be taken care of when he seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Verse 33 says:

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [food, clothing, and shelter] shall be added unto you.

Dr. Bob specifically explained the A.A. slogans “Easy Does It” and “First Things First.” (*DR. BOB and the Good Oldtimers*, pp 135, 144). When he was asked the meaning of “First Things First,” he replied, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” He told his sponsee Clarence S. that “First Things First” came from Matthew 6:33 in the Sermon on the Mount. And this verse was widely quoted in the books that Dr. Bob and the Akron AAs read and recommended (Dick B., *The Good Book and The Big Book*, p. 125, n.119)

On page 60, the Big Book states the A.A. solution to obtaining relief from alcoholism: “God could and would if He were sought.” This concept of “seeking” results by reliance on God instead of reliance on self is a bedrock idea in the Big Book (See pp. 11, 14, 25, 28, 43, 52-53, 57, 62, 28). And we believe the concept was much influenced by the “seeking the kingdom of God first” idea in Matthew 6:33.

Matthew Chapter 7

1. *Taking your own inventory.* Much of A.A.'s Fourth, Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Step procedures involve looking for your own part, for your own fault, in the house-cleaning and life-changing process which, in Appendix II of the Third Edition of the Big Book, became described as “the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism” (Big Book, p. 569). Matthew 7:3-5 states:

And why beholdest thou the mote [speck] that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam [log] that is in thine own eye?

Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull the mote [speck] out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam [log] *is* in thine own eye.

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam [log] out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote [speck] out of thy brother's eye.

These verses were frequently cited by A.A.'s spiritual sources as Biblical authority for the requirement of self-examination and finding one's own part, one's own erroneous conduct, in a relationship problem.

2. *Ask, seek, knock.* Matthew 7:7-11 states:

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

A.A.'s great spiritual teacher, Rev. Sam Shoemaker wrote:

Our part [in the crisis of self-surrender] is to ask, to seek, to knock. His [God's] part is to answer, to come, to open (Shoemaker, *Realizing Religion*, p. 32).

The Runner's Bible (one of the major early A.A. devotionals) has an entire chapter titled, “Ask and Ye shall receive.” Another, *My Utmost for His Highest*, says, about these verses beginning with Matthew 7:7

The illustration of prayer that Our Lord uses here is that of a good child asking for a good thing. . . It is no use praying unless we are living as children of God. Then, Jesus says—“Everyone that asketh receiveth.”

The foregoing verses indicate the importance of becoming a child of God, establishing a harmonious relationship with Him, and then expecting good results from the Father. We believe those verses influenced the following similar ideas in the Big Book:

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 (p. 28).

God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, *if your own house is in order*. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. *See to it that your relationship with Him is right*, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us (p. 164, italics added).

In this same vein, Dr. Bob's wife, Anne, had written in the spiritual journal she shared with early Aas and their families:

We can't give away what we haven't got. We must have a genuine contact with God in our present experience. Not an experience of the past, but an experience in the present—actual, genuine (Dick B., *Anne Smith's Journal*, p. 121)

3. “Do unto others.” The so-called “Golden Rule” cannot readily be identified in the Big Book though it certainly is a much-quoted portion of the Sermon on the Mount which Bill and Dr. Bob said underlies A.A.'s philosophy. The relevant verse is Matthew 7:12:

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Perhaps the following two segments from the Big Book bespeak the philosophy:

We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can (p. 70).

Then you will know what it means to give of yourself that others may survive and rediscover life. You will learn the full meaning of “Love thy neighbor as thyself” (p. 153).

4. *He that doeth the will of my Father*. There are several key verses in the sermon on the mount which may have caused Bob and Bill to say that the sermon contained A.A.'s underlying philosophy. They are the Lord's Prayer itself (Matthew 6:9-13), the so-called Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12), and the phrase “Thy will be done” (Matthew 6:10). However, the bottom line—the major thinking--in terms of what A.A. seems to have borrowed from the Sermon on the Mount, can be found in Matthew 7:21:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Bill Wilson made the major point in the Big Book and in his other writings that the key to success in A.A. was doing the will of the Father—the Father Who is the subject of the Lord's Prayer, and the God upon whom early AAs depended. Wilson wrote:

I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me (Bill's Story, Big Book, p. 13).

He humbly offered himself to his Maker—then he knew (Big Book, p. 57).

. . . praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out (Step Eleven, Big Book, p. 59).

May I do Thy will always (portion of “Third Step Prayer,” Big Book, p. 63)!

Thy will be done (Big Book, pp. 67, 88).

Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen (portion of “Seventh Step Prayer,” Big Book, p. 76).

There is God, our Father, who very simply says, “I am waiting for you to do my will” (*Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, p. 105).