

A.A. is our

MAINSTAY

Stay with us

March, 1956.

P.O. Box 398, Palmerston North.

Vol. 1 No. 10

GOD SPEAKS TO A.A.

The thing which is happening all over the world has come about so gradually and through such material mediums, as to pass unrecognised even by us, for the moral message it really is. Instead of suspending the natural laws by direct intervention, God in His Wisdom has selected a group of men to be purveyors of His goodness. In selecting them through whom to bring about this phenomenon, He went to the humble, to the sick, to the unfortunate. He went to the drunkard, the so-called weakling of the world. Well might He have said to us:-

"Into your weak and feeble hands I have entrusted a power beyond estimate. To you has been given that which has been denied the most learned of your fellows. Not to scientists or statesmen, not to wives or mothers, not even to my priests or ministers, have I given this gift of healing other alcoholics, which I entrust to you. It must be used unselfishly. It carries with it grave responsibilities. No day can be too long, no demands upon your time can be too urgent, no case too pitiable, no task too hard, no effort too great. It must be used with tolerance, for I have restricted its application to no race, no creed and no denomination. Personal criticism you must expect, lack of appreciation will be common, ridicule will be your lot, your motives will be misjudged. Success shall not always attend your efforts in your work with other alcoholics. You must be prepared for adversity, for what men call adversity is the ladder you must use to ascend towards spiritual perfection; and remember, in the exercise of this power, I shall not exact of you beyond your capabilities. You are not selected because of exceptional talents; and be careful always, if success attends your efforts, not to ascribe to personal superiority, that to which you can lay claim only by virtue of My gift. If I had wanted learned men to accomplish this mission, the power would have been entrusted to the physician and scientist. If I had wanted eloquent men there would have been many anxious for the assignment, for talk is the easiest used of all the talents with which I have endowed mankind. If I had wanted scholarly men, the world is filled with better qualified men than you, who would have been available. You were selected because you have been outcasts of the world, and your long experience as a drunkard has made, or should make you humbly alert to the cries of distress that come from the lonely hearts of alcoholics everywhere. Keep ever in mind the admission that you made on the day that you joined A.A. - namely, that you are powerless, and that it was only with your willingness to turn your life and will into My keeping that relief came to you. Think not, that because you have been dry one year or two years or ten years, that it is the result of your unaided efforts. The help which has kept you normal will keep you so just as long as you live this programme which I have mapped out for you. Beware of the pride that comes from growth, the power of numbers and of invidious comparisons between yourselves or of your organisation with other organisations whose success depends upon numbers, power, money or position. These material things are no part of your creed. The success of material organisations comes from the pooling of joint

assets - yours comes from the union of mutual liabilities. Appeal for membership in material organisations is based upon a boastful recital of their accomplishments, yours from the humble admission of weakness; the motto of the successful commercial enterprises is: 'He profits most who serves best'; yours: 'He serves best who seeks no profit'. The wealth of material organisations when they take their inventory, is measured by what they have left; yours, when you take your moral inventory, by what you have given."

If these things had been said to us there are those upon whom the injunction might lie heavily. They might seem austere and difficult commands, but this would only be because we have forgotten the critical nature of our infirmities. Physical disease requires drastic measures for its cure, in many cases delicate and dangerous surgery. Our conditions, when we came into this group, were even more serious than that of one who goes to hospital with a gangrenous limb. For after all the limit of his risk is his life, while we risked life and in addition things more precious, sanity, honour, self-respect. We cannot expect to reach a problem so deep-seated that science deemed it insoluble, with as little effort as is required for the removal of a decayed tooth. It requires the doing of difficult things, including self-discipline and above all unswerving obedience to a conscience. It is part of God's therapy that man's co-operation requires high moral courage in the performance of difficult tasks.

* * * * * Anonymous.

Narrow Margins.

When we hear of someone who has a relapse, thought of it should help us cling the more tenaciously to the right side of the road. We alcoholics have had enough evidence to now know that we can live for years in safety and security - but it only takes one drink, at any time, and tragedy comes. Except for some very narrow escapes, many of us - perhaps all of us - could be numbered with those who have had the misfortune of a relapse. And we may never know how narrowly we had missed - or how truthfully we can say 'There, but for the Grace of God, go I'. In our daily lives and in much that we do, there is often only a very thin line between success and failure. Much may depend on something that we have treated in an inconsequential manner that could mean the difference between safety and sorrow - or it could be one wrong decision among a thousand right ones. All of us should have compassion and understanding for that fellow member who has met misfortune, for the man who has made a mistake. Not one member of our organisation, anywhere at any time, has any reason to be smug or complacent over what he is or what he has, for all that he is or has was given to him. Let us remember that we who have been fortunate have so far been spared through God's Grace - and the next time we see or hear of someone less fortunate let's remember 'There but for the Grace of God go I'. Let us remember too, that absolute safety for us lies only in the meriting of the Grace of God through conscious contact with Him. From John G's. scrapbook.

THREE CHEERS FOR INTOLERANCE.

"Why shouldn't we be intolerant? This tolerance is unfair to the weaker people who need the guard rails of deterrence very often. Wholesome fear is a good thing - it doesn't produce frightened people, it provides a security for the weak. A child who is expected to be home at a certain time at night is a happier child and one less likely to fall to temptation than one whose parents are too tolerant over the matter, in fact wishy-washy about it."

C.A.Joyce talking on the B.B.C.

Here is our tourist map again with quite a bit more information on it. The page is getting quite full now though, and we wondered if we wouldn't do the map again but run a small directory instead. You people will have to supply the information so how about letting us jknow what you would like. Many thanks to those who have expressed appreciation of the paper and thanks too to the odd critic - the occasional brickbat is good for our souls I guess.

Leslie M. advises new address 143 Kings Cres. Lower Hutt Phone Wgtn. 66000/9707M

North Shore

Auckland, Box 2637

Onehunga, Meet Sundays 7.30
Noel 565202

Whakatane

Hamilton, Box 280
Phones. 80800 41875 91603

Rotorua

Gisborne

Tokoroa

Wairoa - Lionel 132M

Napier

Havelock North

New Plymouth

Hunterville

Wanganui

Bulls

Palmerston North
Don Mac 6692 Doug Mac 6675
Fridays 7.30 59 Rangitikei St.
or any time by arrangement

Paraparaumu

Picton

Nelson, Box 260

Hammer Springs
Holidays only, Lou 76

Runanga

Greymouth

Pahiatua

Masterton
Bert 6566
Box 160

Upper Hutt

Lower Hutt
Box 110
Wednesdays
St. James Church

Petone

Eastbourne

Wellington, Box 5196
Phone 50511

Mon. St. Andrews The Terrace
Fri. St. Johns Willis St.

Christchurch - Sat. 8 pm. St. Andrews
Lecture Room, cnr. Tuam & Antigua Sts.
or any time by arrangement
Nat. 61251; 1 Lorry 54733; 2 Lorry 38466
Lou 37715; Terry 45135; Jack 31292
Boxes 1580 and 2062

Geraldine

Timaru Box 154

Clyde

Alexandra Box 28 Meet Thurs.

Oamaru Box 207 Meet Tues.

Roxburgh

Dunedin

South Dunedin, Box 2010 Phone 70395

Green Island

Mosgiel

Stirling

Gore

Winton - Bill S. Box 69

Invercargill, Box 16

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. A.A. has no dues or fees. It is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

The A.A. Program of Recovery is incorporated in

The Twelve Steps

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol . . . that our lives had become unmanageable.

Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Step Three: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.

Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Step Five: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Step Six: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Step Seven: Humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings.

Step Eight: Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

Step Nine: Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Step Ten: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Step Eleven: 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.

Step Twelve: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

THE A.A. PRAYER . . .

God grant me
the **Serenity**
to accept the things
I cannot change.
Courage to change
the things I can,
and **Wisdom**
to know the difference