

ABANDON PART 5 - ABANDON OURSELVES UTTERLY TO GOD

The Word “abandon” is used a number of times in the Big Book and the 12x12 and in several ways.

Webster Dictionary gives several definitions of abandon ... to give up to the control or influence of ... to give up with the intent of never again claiming a right or interest ... to withdraw protection, support, or help from ... to give (oneself) over unrestrainedly ... a thorough yielding to something.

In this series of six (6) lessons on Abandon, Bill W uses several of these definitions in his writing.

By the time we come to Step Three, we are ready to make some changes in our life. We are ready to make some decisions that will impact us in positive ways. We are ready to stop living for ourselves and start living for God. We have come to recognize and acknowledge that we are under qualified to be the manager of our life and that God has bigger plans for us than we have for ourselves. In order to allow God to become the manager, we need God’s help and grace to make this transition. Bill talks about abandoning ourselves utterly or completely to God. This is a real spiritual battle because to do this, we have to stop fight God and surrender to God. When you surrender to God, you give up control and yield to Him. Easy enough...no, not at all! Surrendering to anyone or anything feels counterintuitive and unnatural. Many see surrender as weak, a sign of defeat, and just not an option. In sports, wars, and arguments surrender is a sign that we have lost the battle. And in daily life, you lose battles, surrender and ‘wave the white flag’ many times. Surrendering to God does not mean defeat, it means we humble ourselves and are led by God instead of our own desires. Learning how to surrender to God is one of the hardest but most important things in your faith journey. As someone is said, a real alcoholic needs a real God to win his battle with the drink or drug. Here is what Bill W. says about abandoning ourselves to God.

BB,p63 ... We were now at Step Three. Many of us said to our Maker, as we understood Him: God, I offer myself to Thee -- to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!" We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him. We found it very desirable to take this spiritual step with an understanding person, such as our wife, best friend, or spiritual adviser. 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 expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation. This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once.

- a) What are some of the changes you need to make to have a better life?
- b) Why are we under qualified to be the manager of our life?
- c) Why do we have to stop fighting God?
- d) What do you think it means to surrender to God?
- e) Why is surrendering to God, such a hard thing to do?
- f) Who is the bigger loser, the one who fights God, or the one who's surrenders to God? Why?
- g) Who is your "Maker"?
- h) What do we offer God?
- i) What do we ask God to do with us? Relieve us of? Take away?
- j) Why do we need to think very hard about this decision before we do it?
- k) Why would abandoning ourselves utterly to God be a spiritual step?
- l) While the words we use may be different, how do we express them?

Questions to ask when studying a paragraph or chapter of the Big Book

- 1) What is the main idea in this paragraph? What is this paragraph really all about?
- 2) What does this paragraph teach me about God?
- 3) What does this passage teach me about another person (alcoholic or addict)? Me?
- 4) Is there something in this paragraph that I need to think about? Do more study on? Pray about? Do? Obey?
- 5) Is there something in this paragraph that God wants me to believe? Some truth to receive? Some promise to claim? Some temptation or sin to reject?
- 6) Is there anything in this paragraph that bothers me? Causes me some concern. Raises questions I don't have answers to? If so, why, and what am I going to do about it?
- 7) Is there some sinful behavior, character defect or attitude in this paragraph that I need to confess, repent of or change?
- 8) Is there something in this paragraph that I need to praise God for?
- 9) List 3 to 5 takeaways (new ideas, new thoughts, questions, suggestions, things you are not sure about, etc.) from this paragraph.
- 10) How can you apply something you gained from this paragraph into your personal life?