

What Do We Do With New??

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

Came to believe

Reverend Sam Shoemaker, the minister in whose church Alcoholics Anonymous had its first meeting suggested to people who didn't believe in God that they enter a "thirty-day prayer experiment." He told them, "Don't pay any attention to whether you believe or not. Just pray every day for thirty days that God will meet you at the point of your greatest need, and see what happens to you."

As a person becomes involved in the action of faith, some of the objections to approaching God evaporate and one is led quietly into a belief in the living God - and to seeing the face of God in Jesus Christ.

Seek the LORD while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near. Let the people turn to the LORD that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

That a power greater than ourselves ...

My sponsor used to say to me, "Did the sun go down last night?" I would say, "Yes." Next he would ask me, "Did it come up this morning?" and I would answer, "Yes." Then he would ask, "Did you have anything to do with it?" and I would say, "No." And then he would say, "So, there is a power greater than ourselves, don't you think?" And I would have to answer, "Yes."

"My thoughts are completely different from yours," says the LORD. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55)

For many of us, the issue is not whether God exists or not but whether God exists for me and whether God, in any way, impacts my day to day living. It seems such a challenge to reach out and trust a God I cannot see, and yet the evidence for His presence is overwhelming if I will just look.

Could restore us to sanity ...

The act of believing changes the focus of a person's life, removes it from an ever-tightening cycle of self-absorption, from attempts to control unmanageable problems alone, and from immersion into a welter of self-centered emotions like shame and fear. The simple act of believing can give a person a new direction when he/she believes there is help beyond one's own inadequate resources.

For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him. (Philippians 2)

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. (Isaiah 41)

"You didn't have enough faith," Jesus told them. "I assure you, even if you had faith as small as a mustard seed you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible." (Matthew 17)

God wants to meet our deepest needs. We must open our hearts and minds to receive His gentle healing. We do that by welcoming something new - new power, new ideas, new life, new hope - a new God. Living as our own power, or our own god, resulted in insanity and pain. God invites us to what is true and real and satisfying. God invites us to believe. What will we do with the new?

Questions for Reflection and Study

1. What's been insane about living life on my own without the involvement of a Higher Power?
2. What can I expect of God in this process as I come to believe?
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4. What part do I play in this coming to believe?
5. What has the process of "coming to believe" been for me so far?
6. Why might the Creator of the Universe - God - be a reasonable Higher Power to believe?
7. How might I take a risk to reach out to connect with God and give myself space to "come to believe?"

Bible quotations from *Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

Meditation Notes adapted from *A Hunger for Healing* (New York, NY, Harper Collins) 1991 and from *Power Recovery* (New York & Mahwah, NJ, Paulist Press) 1995