

# A Life of Prayerful Surrender

**Step Three: We made a decision to turn our will and our life over to the care of God as we understood Him.**

**Step 3 Prayer: "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!"** (Big Book Page 63)

**When you pray, I will listen. If you look for me in earnest, you will find me when you seek me. I will be found by you," says the LORD.** (Jeremiah 29:13)

Living in recovery and following the twelve steps is a spiritual journey. It requires a spiritual commitment and a spiritual way of living. Many of us choose, at some point to turn what we know of our life over to the care of what we know of God. We are usually in pretty desperate straights and likely see no other hope. We are hurting and tired and confused. We recognize that our way of doing things has ended in pain, frustration, sickness and despair.

We come to God because we know we need help. We come to God because someone has shared with us that God is a Higher Power who can restore us to sanity. We're willing to do just about anything that we are told or shown to be God's will, whether it is tried and true life practices from a sponsor, principles in the Bible, or other ideas from trusted friends with a solid life in recovery.

However, in each of our lives there comes a time when we are stronger, feel like we know a bit now, feel like we can handle things a bit better now, and we hear something in the program or in the Bible that is different from what we now desire. What are we to do? Follow our desire or trust the wisdom that is coming to us that "goes against the grain" of our feelings? These are the moments when we find out if we truly have given our lives over to the care of God or if we have simply chosen for short term pain relief.

Step Three is not simply one decision. Step Three is an ongoing process of continuous surrender to the will of God as it impacts our choices on a daily basis. We can expect to have many instances where the life practices we've known in addiction are now challenged in recovery. Many of those practices are the underlying problem areas that led to the fear and pain that led us to addictive behaviours. We may think they are unrelated to our recovery because they are not specifically drug or alcohol related but they are, in fact, the very source of our problem that led us to mood altering addictions.

It is in learning ways of relationship -- whether with God, ourselves or others -- where we need help if we are to truly have a new life. Particularly in the early years of recovery, when we face the contradiction between God's way of life and life as we've known it, we will need to let go of our own thinking and let God form something new in us. We will have to stand against the desire and feeling of the moment and surrender our will and our life to God's care knowing that He cares for us more than we care for ourselves. He knows the way to real life for us. Our way truly is harmful and deadly. How many times have we already proven that? Even though it is inconvenient and perhaps even momentarily uncomfortable, it is time to surrender, let God build us and do with us as He wills.

Dr. Bob, one of the founders of AA used this as his Step 3 prayer: **Dear God, I'm sorry about the mess I've made of my life. I want to turn away from all the wrong things I've ever done and all the wrong things I've ever been. Please forgive me for it all.**

**I know You have the power to change my life and can turn me into a winner. Thank You, God for getting my attention long enough to interest me in trying it Your way.**

**God, please take over the management of my life and everything about me. I am making this conscious decision to turn my will and my life over to Your care and am asking You to please take over all parts of my life.**

**Please, God, move into my heart. However You do it is Your business, but make Yourself real inside me and fill my awful emptiness. Fill me with your love and Holy Spirit and make me know Your will for me. And now, God, help Yourself to me and keep on doing it. I'm not sure I want You to, but do it anyhow.**

**I rejoice that I am now a part of Your people, that my uncertainty is gone forever, and that You now have control of my will and my life. Thank You and I praise Your name. Amen.**

Do I dare to turn my will and my life over to the care of God, today, in whatever areas my thinking and behaving are different from how God has clearly shown His will for me?

## Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. Who IS in control of my life? What indicators are there that this is the case?
2. How do I go about making the shift from a "half hearted" commitment of convenience to a commitment that follows Jesus every day even through temptation and difficulty?