

August 6, 2005

PROPHETIC TOPIC

**I BEGAN TO SEE MYSELF AS GOD SAW ME**

FORMAT

**OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCE GUEST**

**LOVE AND LIGHT, I'M REV. PHIL AND I'M YOUR HOST FOR "WORDS OF THE PROPHETS." MY LAST SHOW FOCUSED ON THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN BEATITUDES. THIS WAS DONE AS MEANS OF INTRODUCING YOU, THE LISTENING AUDIENCE, TO A SET OF SPIRITUAL TOOLS THAT COULD BE UTILIZED IN YOUR DAILY LIFE. IN ADDITION TO THE BEATITUDES, WE ALSO LOOKED AT BUDDHISM'S "FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS" AND "NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH" AS ANOTHER SET OF SPIRITUAL TOOLS. BECAUSE MY BACKGROUND, BELIEFS AND MINISTRY ARE TRANSDENOMINATIONAL, THIS MORNING I WANT TO PROVIDE YOU WITH ANOTHER SET OF TOOLS, ONES THAT ARE NOT A PART OF ANY RELIGION, THE 12 STEPS. THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE BEEN LISTENING TO THIS SHOW OVER THE YEARS HAVE HEARD ME TALK ABOUT THE PART THE 12 STEPS HAVE PLAYED IN MY LIFE. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE 12 STEPS ARE DIVINE IN ORIGIN AND ARE THE PERFECT BLENDING OF THERAPEUTIC AND SPIRITUAL.**

**THIS MORNING'S PROPHETIC TOPIC IS "I BEGAN TO SEE MYSELF AS GOD SAW ME". I'VE BORROWED THE PROPHETIC TOPIC FROM A QUOTE BY FRANK N. D. BUCHMAN, WHO WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE OXFORD GROUP. THE OXFORD GROUP WAS THE FERTILE GROUND FROM WHICH THE FELLOWSHIP OF AA AND THE 12 STEP RECOVERY PROGRAM WAS BORN. THE QUOTE WAS BUCHMAN'S DESCRIPTION OF THE SPIRITUAL AWAKENING HE EXPERIENCED. IT READS AS FOLLOWS: "I BEGAN TO SEE MYSELF AS GOD SAW ME, WHICH WAS A VERY DIFFERENT PICTURE THAN THE ONE I HAD OF MYSELF. I REALIZED HOW MY SIN, MY PRIDE, MY SELFISHNESS, HAD ECLIPSED ME FROM GOD. I WAS THE CENTER OF MY OWN LIFE. THAT BIG "I" HAD TO BE CROSSED OUT. IT PRODUCED A VIBRANT FEELING, AS THOUGH A STRONG CURRENT OF LIFE HAD SUDDENLY BEEN Poured INTO ME."**

**BEFORE WE GET STARTED WITH OUR DISCUSSION LET ME REMIND YOU THAT WE WANT AND NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU. PLEASE CALL US AT 428-1382.**

**HISTORY: IN 1908, FRANK BUCHMAN, THE FOUNDER AND MINISTER OF A CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA HAD A FALLING OUT WITH HIS TRUSTEES, RESIGNED AND WENT TO EUROPE. IN ENGLAND, BUCHMAN HAD THE SPIRITUAL AWAKENING DESCRIBED IN THE PROPHETIC TOPIC. BUCHMAN WENT TO NEARBY OXFORD UNIVERSITY AND FORMED AN EVANGELICAL GROUP THERE AMONG THE STUDENT LEADERS AND ATHLETES. THE GROUP GREW AND SPREAD OVER THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS. GROUPS WERE FORMED ALL OVER THE WORLD, INCLUDING THE U.S. THE OXFORD GROUP AND THEIR PRINCIPLES WERE IN PLACE AND FUNCTIONING IN BOTH NEW YORK CITY AND AKRON, OHIO WHEN BILL WILSON AND DR. BOB SMITH HIT THEIR RESPECTIVE ALCOHOLIC BOTTOMS. IN 1935 EVENTS CONSPIRED TO MAKE POSSIBLE A MEETING, IN AKRON, BETWEEN DR. BOB SMITH AND BILL WILSON. THIS MEETING LEAD TO THE FOUNDING OF AA. THE ORIGINAL STEPS OF THE OXFORD GROUP NUMBERED 6 (EQUAL TO, IN THEIR ORIGINAL SEQUENCE, #'s 1, 4, 5, 9, 12 & 11). IN AA THE STEPS WERE EXPANDED TO 12.**

- 1st. WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER (BEHAVIOR) - THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.**
- SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR (HONESTY & SURRENDER) (DENIAL – CANNOT HAVE POWER OVER THAT WHICH DOESN'T EXIST)**
  - PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS**
  - FIRST IMPULSE**
  - POWER OVER OUR ACTIONS**
  - CREATE OUR OWN REALITY**

**2nd. CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.**

- ACCEPT AS TRUE AND REAL**
- COUNTERBALANCE FOR STEP 1**
- FOUNDATION FOR REMAINDER OF THE STEPS**
- RESTORE TO SANITY**

**3rd. MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD GOD.**

- COMMIT TO A COURSE OF ACTION**
- TURN OVER WILL= GUIDANCE FOR ACTIONS**
- TURN OVER LIVES= RESULTS OF OUR ACTIONS**
- CARE**

**4th. MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.**

- MEET OURSELVES IN OUR BELIEFS AND DETERMINE IF OUR DEMONSTRATIONS MATCH**

**5th. ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS.**

- SEQUENCE ESTABLISHES THE PRIORITIES FOR OUR RELATIONSHIPS**
- ANOTHER LEVEL OF HONESTY AND SURRENDER**
- RELEASES SHAME**

**6th. WERE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL THESE DEFECTS OF CHARACTER.**

- OUR WE READY TO CHANGE OUR LIVES**
- REMOVE = RELIEVE**
- DEFECTS = CHARACTER TRAITS THAT DO NOT SERVE US**
- BEING SEPARATE FROM GOD AND OTHER HUMAN BEINGS**

**7th. HUMBLY ASKED GOD TO REMOVE OUR SHORTCOMINGS.**

- HUMILITY IS NOT THINKING LESS OF SELF, IT IS THINKING OF SELF LESS**
- REMOVE = RELIEVE**
- SHORTCOMINGS ARE ACTING ON DEFECTS OF CHARACTER**

**8th. MADE A LIST OF ALL PERSONS WE HAD HARMED AND BECAME WILLING TO MAKE AMENDS TO THEM ALL.**

- ACKNOWLEDGING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPACT OUR ACTIONS HAD ON OTHERS**
- BEHAVIOR HAS CHANGED, 4 – 7**
- DEFINITION OF HARMED VERY IMPORTANT, WE PERCEIVE MORE HARM THAN REALLY DONE**

**9th. MAKE DIRECT AMENDS TO SUCH PEOPLE WHEREVER POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN TO DO SO WOULD INJURE THEM OR OTHERS.**

- TAKING FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR ACTIONS**
- MAKING AMENDS**

- 10th. CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG, PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT.**
- BUILDS SELF AWARENESS**
  - ADMIT NOT SORRY**
- 11th. SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD GOD, PRAYING ONLY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.**
- OUR EGO(LOWER SELF) IS POWERFUL AND WE NEED TO REINFORCE OUR HIGHER SELF**
  - THE POWER (STEP 1) TO CARRY IT OUT IS THE CUMULATIVE MOMENTUM OF OUR FAITH**
- 12th. HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO OTHERS AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.**
- OUR HIGHER SELF IS NOW THE MASTER AND OUR LOWER SELF IS THE SERVANT**
  - THE ONLY REQUIREMENT IS TO WORK THE STEPS**
  - MESSAGE IS THAT WE CAN CHANGE**
  - TRY MEANS WHAT SOMEONE DOES WITH THE MESSAGE IS NOT OUR RESPONSIBILITY**
  - WALK OUR TALK**