

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (ALSO NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS)

THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

IF "GOD" SPOKE TO A. A. "HE" MIGHT HAVE SAID: "Into your weak and feeble hands I have entrusted a power beyond your estimate. To you has been given that which has been denied to the most learned of your fellows. Not to scientists or statesmen, not even to my priests and ministers have I given this gift of healing other alcoholics, which I entrust to you...." (*Beginner's Manual*, p. 42, Alcoholics Anonymous)

THE A. A. RELIGION

FOREWORD

When this booklet was first printed in 1986, our purpose was to present the Biblical and dictionary-supported fact that AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) is a religion. What we did not know at that time was that the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin had already recognized that fact in 1984 in a Summary Court judgment.

The following excerpt, including the court's decision on AA, has been quoted from the Department of Health and Social Services *MEMO SERIES DCS-85-15/ACTION* dated February 12, 1985, regarding the Intoxicated Driver Program-Advisory Notice on Legal Issues and Recommendations on Procedural Safeguards. This State Advisory memo was directed to: Assessment Facility Contacts, Designated Coordinators for the IDP, and all State-Approved AODA Programs:

"Freedom from Religious Indoctrination"

During 1984, an intoxicated driver client pursued a federal civil rights suit alleging abridgment of his first amendment right to freedom of

religion. The suit was filed against five defendants: Price County Council on Alcoholism, Inc.; Unified Services Board of Ashland, Iron, and Price Counties; Ashland County; Iron County; and Price County. The suit contended that the client's driver licenses, including a chauffeur's license, were unreasonably suspended indefinitely by the Department of Transportation (DOT), based on the Price County Council's noncompliance report. This was unreasonable, the client claimed, because he was not able to complete his Driver Safety Plan requiring inpatient treatment, due to (allegedly) imposed religion. Examples were religious artifacts and activities such as required readings and prayer meetings involving Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) programming at a religiously supported hospital inpatient-AODA treatment program.

The first trial before Judge Shabaz of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin ended in mistrial due to a deadlocked jury. Two days before the retrial was to begin, the suit was settled with an out-of-court cash settlement arranged by the attorneys and insurance companies. Unresolved by the jury was whether or not the Price County Council (which made the IDP referral and filed the noncompliance report, but is not an inpatient provider) had offered the client "the option of receiving inpatient alcohol treatment at facilities that used non-religious treatment programs." The other question to the jury would have been whether or not religious activities, such as AA, were a mandatory part of the inpatient treatment facility's alcoholism program.

Based on the final pre-trial conference before the scheduled retrial, Judge Shabaz issued several summary judgments dated November 19, 1984. He found that the two following issues were of "no genuine issue of material fact" and that the new jury would not have to make a determination, because the court had decided the following:

- 1) That the client's "choice to enter the treatment program was, ...coerced, because it was made under threat of losing his license," and

2) "Religion was a part in the treatment program ...Alcoholics Anonymous materials ...and the testimony of the witnesses established without a doubt that religious activities, as defined in constitutional law, were a part of the treatment program. The distinction between religion and spirituality is meaningless," from a constitutional standpoint.

These statements by the court have had immediate impact on the IDP Procedures in Ashland, Iron, and Price Counties, since the summary judgments are binding on the five (5) parties named in the Federal suit. The Unified Services Board has amended its 1985 contract language with its providers specifically prohibiting any mandatory religious programming, as defined by the court. The assessment facilities routinely inform AODA clients about this issue when explaining the treatment programs available to the client. Treatment providers are offering secular alternatives and informing all service recipients of their constitutional right to not participate in or be subject to any religious activities or elements.

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSSS) recognizes AA's assertions that it has no religious affiliation and that it is not a religious organization. The Department also recognizes the inestimable support that AA membership and AODA programming have provided for many recovering people. However, since this court proceeding and several others have found religious and spiritual activities impossible to distinguish from a constitutional standpoint, the Department encourages programs to take a proactive stance and avoid unnecessary legal challenges. In addition to the discussion below, we do anticipate that there will be revisions in the code related to client rights and optional programming in the conflict of interest section of CH. HSS 62, Leis. Adm. Code, "Assessment of drivers with Alcohol or Controlled Substance Problems."

The Division suggests that all AODA programs review their treatment plans to see if they require participation in any program that can be construed as religious. If so, it is recommended that programs also offer optional parallel secular (non-religious and non-spiritual) programming. Minimally, community service boards and human services departments (CSBHSD'S) and IDP assessment facilities must assure accessibility to optional parallel secular programming. Optional secular programs may be structured individual or group therapy, counseling, or discussion sessions without AA involvement and without planned or religious or spiritual content. During secular programs, clients may initiate religious or spiritual discussion, but the program providers or group leaders should not present or require discussions of a spiritual or religious nature.

State certification of all treatment facilities requires adherence to client rights, under s. 51.61, Wis. Stats., which include freedom in religious participation. All IDP assessment agencies should also include this program information when assisting clients in choosing among the appropriate treatment providers in order to complete their Driver Safety Plan.

The Division is in the process of establishing a form which can be used by all IDP assessment agencies. It will be a form for client signature, which can be given to the client and kept in the IDP client file, to ensure client acknowledgment of receipt of this and other civil rights.

You are reminded that attendance at any (community) self-help group can only occur with the IDP client's consent. Self-help group involvement, alone, has never been acceptable as a complete Driver Safety Plan (DSP); approved AODA programs are the basic DSP for IDP clients with dependency findings. Self-help groups should (except when there has been prior membership and renewed agreement) only be considered for part of the individualized treatment plan (which is

developed and agreed to between the client and the treater) when the DSP already includes AODA programs or treatment services and the client voluntarily agrees.

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Recent findings stating that alcoholism is not a disease have also shaken up the AA system. Of course, students of the Bible have been aware of this fact for quite some time. If you would like other information on alcohol or drug abuse counseling from a Christian Biblical perspective, or information on psychiatric drug abuse in our society, direct all inquiries to the address found on the last page of this booklet.

SHOULD CHRISTIANS BE INVOLVED WITH AA?

AA, first formed as a help agency for people abusing alcohol, is now accepted nationwide in courts, communities, detention homes, prisons, and jails. Most people committing alcohol-related crimes are literally forced into the tenets and teachings of the AA religion. The AA staff would immediately take issue with their organization being called a "religion." Yet, as English-speaking people, we are bound by the dictionary definitions of the words we use. The dictionary gives this definition of religion: "The beliefs, attitudes, emotions, behavior, etc., constituting man's relationship with the powers and principalities of the universe...." The following are excerpts from AA's 12-step teachings:

Step #2 "...believe that a POWER greater than us, ...

Step #3 ...God as we understood Him, ...

Step #5 ...Admit to God, ...

Step #6 ...have God remove, ...

Step #7 ...ask Him to remove, ... and

Step #11 ...improve our conscious contact with God, as we understand HIM, praying only for knowledge of His will, ..."

These excerpts give us more than enough evidence to support the fact that AA is most certainly and definitely a religion!

Should born-again, Bible-believing Christians be involved with AA? Should they support AA or encourage others to be involved with AA? Before we decide, let's look at some more information.

AA is categorized, obviously, as a polytheistic religion. That is, in the AA scope of things, you may choose anything or anybody as your "Higher Power" (or god). The terms "higher power" and "god" are used because of their ambiguity and could even satisfy an atheist, whose "higher power" is he himself. Thus, the atheist, the Muslim, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Moonie, the Mormon, the Jehovah's Witness, the Catholic, the 7th Day Adventist, the Christian Scientist,

etc., may all gather together in prayer, fellowship, and encouragement of those having a common cause. Yet each may have a different god.

The Bible encourages true Christians to study the Scriptures, so that they will not be "ashamed" Christians. Let's look at a few verses from the Bible to see how God views polytheistic religious thinking.

Exodus 20:3-5 -- "You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, ..."

Isaiah 45:5-6 -- "I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides Me there is no god. I will gird you, though you have not known Me. That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that there is no one beside Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other...."

John 14:6 -- Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me."

The Bible also refers to Jesus as "...our Great God and Savior" (*Titus 2:13*). Jesus' says about himself in *John 8:24* "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."

In *John 4:22*, Jesus responds to a woman who was religious, but did not know the one true God, "You worship that which you do not know."

In *John 11:25-26*, Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

In *Acts 17:23*, Paul, speaking to the polytheistic Greeks of Athens, states, "What you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you."

Neither our LORD Jesus, nor His disciples had any problem understanding God's dislike of polytheism or correcting it when necessary. Polytheism, which is better defined as idolatry, is willful disobedience to God's commands, a crime against God -- SIN, to be exact (*Romans 1:19-23*).

1 Corinthians 10:28 teaches the Christian to not eat meat offered to idols.

1 Corinthians 10:14 commands us to flee from idolatry (or polytheism).

II Corinthians 6:14,17 requires avoiding a mixed "fellowship of unbelievers."

The obedient Christian has the following responsibilities to those involved in Alcoholics Anonymous:

1. To not be involved with AA, if at all possible,
2. To warn them of their sin of idolatry,
3. To point them to the only true and living God, the Father of our LORD and Savior, Jesus Christ, and
4. To warn them not to join "religious fellowships" of unbelievers.

Polytheism, or idolatry, is not the only error in AA's teachings. God, through His Holy Word -- the Bible -- puts His finger on another error in the AA philosophy. AA would have us believe that alcohol abuse is a disease, an allergy, contracted at times, genetically. Although there is no cure, abstinence -- they claim -- can help keep it in remission. This theory, like the Theory of Evolution, claims scientific support, but none exists other than psychiatric "speculation."

The Bible teaches that the only reasons for abstaining from alcoholic beverages are "personal choice, vows, and fastings." Abstinence is not a method of advancing personal spirituality or spiritual growth, nor is it of any value against fleshly indulgence (*Colossians 2:20-23*).

The word used in the Bible to define the abuse of alcohol is "drunkenness," and the person, a "drunkard." "Drunkenness" is not a disease; it is a SIN -- a "deed of the flesh." In fact, this sin, along with idolatry (polytheism) and some other sins, is listed in *Galatians 5:19-21* and *1 Corinthians 5:11 & 6:10*. *Romans 13:12-14* also reveals that drunkenness is a behavioral problem -- a SIN!

How does God's Word say we, as Christians, should handle this sin that AA calls a disease? In *Galatians 5:19-21*, God states that if we "walk by the Spirit" we will be totally and miraculously cured of drunkenness! Literally millions have been cured of alcohol and drug abuse by this very method. It is God's method and the ONLY one that has lasting results. Drunkenness (alcoholism) is a spiritual problem and must be treated by the one true God's method, found in the Bible. "Walking by the Spirit" begins by recognizing these Biblical truths:

1. That we all have committed crimes (sinned) against the one true God, and that we deserve to be punished in hell forever (*Romans 3:23, 6:23; Rev. 21:8*).
2. That the one true God (the Father) allowed His body part (the Word) to become a human being (Jesus Christ). This God/Man paid the penalty for all our sins with His body and blood on the cross; died, and after suffering three days in the flames of Hades, rose from the grave three days later (*John 1:1,14*;

Acts 2; 24-31; Philipians 2:6-8 and 1 Peter 2:24). And, that by faith in Jesus' work on the cross and in Hades, we receive the free gift on total forgiveness and eternal life (*1 John 5:13*). If we believe these things, then His Holy Spirit is living in us to give us real power and victory over, not only drunkenness, but all our sins (*Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 5:25*).

3. To continue to "walk by the Spirit," God's Word, the Bible, must be studied, meditated on, and obeyed. This is how God speaks to us, showing us His will and His TRUE PLAN for our lives.

4. We need to pray to the, Father, through the blood and mediation of His Son, the LORD Jesus Christ. This is how we talk to the one true and living God.

5. We need to talk to others about Jesus, telling them that He is the ONLY way to the true and living God (*John 14:6*).

In the *Beginner's Manual*, published by AA, we find the following section:

If "God" spoke to A.A. "He" might have said:

"Into your (AA's) weak and feeble hands I (God) have entrusted a power beyond your estimate. To you has been given that which has been denied to the most learned of your fellows. Not to scientists or statesmen, not to wives or mothers, not even to My priests and ministers have I given this gift of healing other alcoholics, which I entrust to you, ..." (parentheses added)

The truth is that God has never said nor would he say any such thing. There are many religions that claim extra-Biblical revelation and power. Obviously, AA would like to join the ranks of those who make such claims as evidenced by this imagined speech from "their" god. The fictitious "quote" goes on to proclaim the AA organization as the ONLY hope for anyone abusing alcohol according to their definition of an alcoholic. They say that not even we born-again Christians, who are God's ministers and priests, are able to share in this gift given to them by AA's god.

God, in *Deuteronomy 13:6-11*, states that anyone encouraging someone to worship other than the one true and living God was to be put to death.

Jesus tells us in *Revelation 21:8* that people having a higher power (god) other than the one true God (which is idolatry) will be in the Lake of Fire.

Yes, God takes a very dim view of idolatry; and so do all true followers of Jesus Christ.

Do not be deceived by "situation ethics" -- which teaches that the "end justifies the means!" You do not have to become an idolater while you are being cured

of your drunkenness. Christ, NOT AA, has the ONLY power to properly cure the drunkard (alcoholic). We can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens us according to *Philippians 4:13*.

This statement was made about the Apostle Paul in *Acts 19:26*, "This Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are NO GODS AT ALL!"

CHRISTIAN, COULD THIS STATEMENT BE MADE ABOUT YOU,
OR ARE YOU ENCOURAGING IDOLATRY BY YOUR SILENCE?
UPDATE ON NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

Since this booklet exposing Alcoholics Anonymous as a religion was first distributed, our investigation of NA materials also revealed that Narcotics Anonymous is also a religion! From the white book--an introductory booklet given to clients of NA -- we quote from their FOREWORD: "Our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions were adopted from those of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are deeply grateful to the AA Fellowship for showing us the way to a new life."

Like AA, NA calls itself a "fellowship" (p.1), and considers drug addiction a "disease" (p.3). Their list of "spiritual principles" (p.3-5) is identical to those in the AA *Beginner's Manual* (little blue booklet, p.46), except for the substituting of the word "drug" addiction in place of AA's "alcohol". On page xiii of the 290 page NA *Basic Test* black book, NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS states:

"With gratitude in our cleanliness, we dedicate our N.A. book to the loving service of our Higher Power. That through the development of a conscious contact with God, no addict seeking recovery need die without having had a chance to find a better way of life."

WARNING!

Reader, be not deceived! Both AA and NA are involved in polytheistic, IDOLATROUS religious practices! Christians who fellowship with such multi-god religions are in disobedience to *2 Cor. 6:14-18*. We warn them, even as *Galatians 5:20-21* has warned, that if they choose to practice idolatry by joining and staying in either of these two fellowships they "shall not INHERIT the Kingdom of God." That is, they will suffer the discipline of their heavenly Father here on earth, and suffer eternal shame and loss of rewards in heaven, *1 Cor. 3:14-15; Revelation 22:15*.

Obedient Christians should be attending a church that recognizes the following: that there is only one God (the God of the Bible), whose body part became a man (Jesus Christ) to purchase for us the free gift of eternal life, saving us from the hell that we will always deserve; that salvation is by God's grace and our

faith, and can never be lost, revoked, or returned; and that God's Word, the Bible, has the answers to all of our problems and gives us the power to overcome all of our sinful addictions.

II Peter 1:3 – Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

For questions or comments call or write:
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1436 W. Arthur Ave., Milwaukee WI 53215
Call toll free 1-877-YRU-REAL or visit www.gnmc.us