

A God of Our Own Understanding

By Rick R.

I came into AA Bankrupt in every department. When I started to take the steps, my first big challenge was to find a power greater than myself that could solve my problems. What an order for a guy who they describe in step two in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (12&12) as the one who had tried religion and found it wanting. I could see the examples of people around me that seemed to have it figured out and I became a nuisance trying to corner them to get them to explain to me how they do it and one day I confronted my friend, Jim, and asked him to let me in on the secret. Frustrated, He asked, "Do you want to drink right now"? My answer was "NO." He then asked me, "Did you want to drink a year ago"? And my answer was "YES." Next, he asked me "What made the difference"? My answer was that I was *influenced* by the A.A. program. His next question was, "Do you have any Problem calling that God? **WOW!** What a concept

When I am sitting in an AA meeting, as I listen to all the different people sharing, it occurs to me that there may be as many different examples of spiritual experiences as there are people who have had them, and they come in different forms. They can be of the burning bush variety or a psychic change enough to bring about recovery from alcoholism. Or, as I like to believe, my spiritual experience came in the form of a " *Profound Change of Perception.*" When it occurred to me that all my thinking was flawed and that I was finally in an environment where I could start to follow simple unselfish guidelines that would restore my self-esteem and put me at peace with myself and others, I started this wonderful journey and I have never had it so good. These *universal truths* are common in all philosophies, and I must seek them out if I want to heal. I pray to God every day, even though I do not know who or what God is. My mind is not sophisticated enough to understand God and I am not sure that God hears my prayers, but **I HEAR MY PRAYERS** and that puts me in the best possible attitude I can have about the issue I pray for. My prayers are always the same. I pray for knowledge of his will for me and strength to carry it out. I.e., " God, please show me what to do and please give me the strength to do it, I don't do to well on my own." I often knew what to do but was not always strong enough to do what was right. Today I am stronger.

Who or what God is? I am not sure anyone can define God any more than they can answer two simple questions, such as: 1) Where does space end and what is beyond that? 2) When did time start and what came before that? My simple mind may never know the answers to these questions, but I do know what God does. When I ask for guidance, I become a better receiver and I hear the answers that used to pass right over my head before I entered AA. I thank God for an open mind. It may turn out that we are all praying to the same God, and I am more in that vein of thinking. If faith in God started in one place and spread out all over the world, that would be one thing, but the faith in God started in separate civilizations all over the world and when they came together, they had the same basic concepts. It may be as easy as praying to the same God in different languages. If that is the case, I can only say one thing, when my time is done and I pass on, I will go to any God that will have me because I am doing the best can down here on earth.