

Some Variations of “The Third Step Prayer”*

* This statement follows the Third Step Prayer on page 63 of the Big Book:

“*The wording* [used for the prayer to affirm our “3rd Step Decision”] *was, of course, quite optional so long as we expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation.*”

Some of our founders and early members of the fellowship used a prayer other than the one on page 63 of the Big Book to take newcomers through their “decision” -- namely because the Big Book wasn’t printed until 1939 and they got our Program from Oxford Group principles. Bill W., Dr. Bob, and Bill D. started making 12 Step calls and taking others through the “steps” in the summer of 1935.

Here are a couple examples of “3rd Step Prayers” used by our early members:

THIRD STEP PRAYER

Used by Dr. Bob

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 praise Your name. Amen.

THIRD STEP PRAYER

Used by Clarence Snyder

(Both sponsor and protégé on their knees...)

Sponsor says: God, this is _____, he is coming to You in all humility to ask You to guide and direct him.

_____ realizes that his life is messed up and unmanageable. _____ is coming to You Lord in all humility to ask to be one of your children – to work for you, to serve and dedicate his life to you and to turn his will over that he may be an instrument of your love.

(Protégé repeats after the sponsor):

Lord, I ask that you guide and direct me, and that I have decided to turn my life and will over to you. To serve You and to dedicate my life to You. I thank you Lord, I believe that if I ask this in prayer, I shall receive what I have asked for. Thank you God. Amen.

Prayer of Abandonment

Father, I abandon myself into Your hands; do with me what you will.

Whatever You may do, I thank You; I am ready for all, I accept all.

Let only Your will be done in me, and in all Your creatures – I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Into your hands I commend my soul; I offer it to You with all the love of my heart, for I love You, Lord, and so need to give myself, to surrender myself into Your hands, without reserve, and without reserve, and with boundless confidence, for You are my Father.

--Charles de Foucauld

Third Step Prayer “Translated”

God, I give myself to you. You use me as you want.

Relieve me of my self-will, So I may better do God’s will.

Take away my fears, my selfishness, and self-centeredness,

So I can be an example of your Power, your Love, and your Way of Life to others.

May I do God's will always.

The Third Step Prayer Exercise

Here is the Third Step Prayer as stated in the Big Book on page 63:

**“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!”**

Try this exercise to be done after you’ve “decided to turn your will and your life over to the care of God as you understood God”. **Write your own Third Step Prayer**. As the Big Book says on page 63, “The wording was, of course, quite optional so long as we expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation.”

YOUR prayer can be read to your sponsor, spiritual advisor, or a friend (expressing the idea, voicing it without reservation) before we say the Big Book’s Third Step Prayer, together, as a group.