

That Amazing Grace: The Role of Clarence and Grace S. in Alcoholics Anonymous

Dick B.



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That Amazing Grace: The Role of Clarence and Grace S. in Alcoholics Anonymous Dick B. This is the story of the immense contribution made by early A.A. pioneer Clarence H. Snyder to the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous in Cleveland, its astonishing growth there in early A.A. years, and its even more unique documented 93% success rate. It is told through the eyes of Clarence Snyder's widow "Amazing Grace" Snyder (as Clarence called her). There have been other accounts, some very good, of the Clarence Snyder story. But this one was prepared by author Dick B. after spending a week in Florida with Grace, interviewing her and going over historical details not previously reported. Here you will learn the close bond between Clarence and his third wife, Grace. You will learn how they worked together in sponsoring new people, praying and studying together, and conducting the spiritual retreats for AAs and their families that Clarence had earlier founded. In a sense, you will conclude that Clarence is really the hero of early A.A. He didn't care for Bill Wilson or his financial meanderings. But, when he chose to organize the Cleveland fellowship, he took the best of A.A. with him and applied it. There were four basic parts: (1) The Bible. (2) The Four Absolutes of the Oxford Group. (3) The new Big Book just published. (4) The Twelve suggested steps for recovery that the Big Book laid out. This was new ground. Dr. Bob had already thoroughly convinced and indoctrinated Clarence about the efficacy of God's power, the importance of the Bible, the techniques for approaching newcomers, and the essential conversion to Christ. But, as he essentially made A.A. palatable and available to Roman Catholics who had been having difficulty with the so-called "Protestant" Akron program, Clarence brought the Bible with him. He kept the biblical principles in the Four absolutes--honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love. He dived into the Big Book, and he began taking hordes of newcomers through the Twelve Steps in very short order. In other words, he embraced the essentials of Oxford Group standards; he embraced the biblical orientation of Dr. Bob; and he applied the Big Book program of recovery that Bill Wilson had just gained approval to publish in 1939. All this as seen and interpreted by Clarence's devoted and loyal wife Grace. And carried forward by Grace after Clarence died. The companion to this book is the "Our Legacy" book recently compiled and edited by Dick B. and written by three Clarence Snyder oldtimer sponsees and their wives, detailing the history and the exact methods Clarence used in taking people through the Steps and in conducting the spiritual retreats which are still being held in the United States and Great Britain. This is a heart-warming personalized book about an unusually devoted couple of A.A. Twelfth-steppers.

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Doug Martin:

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