



## Thoughts, by Pastor Ed

“Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil **until we let go absolutely.**”

–AA Big Book, page 58

This statement from the Big Book comes from the chapter on How it Works and it's about personal recovery from alcoholism. And although it is about personal recovery it teaches a principle that could be applied to many aspects of life and spirituality. It's a principle that could even be applied to the church.

We do hold onto old ideas even when they are no longer working and irrelevant to our current circumstances. The church is notorious for this. The church tends to be backward looking, hanging onto language and practices long after they are relevant to current world realities.

Years ago, when Haiti was going through the aftermath of a terrible earthquake a pastor colleague reported they desperately needed bandages. He asked us all to gather old sheets, strip them and roll them into bandages.

We had a group of women who met weekly to make quilts. I told them about the problem and they agreed that if I got them sheets, they would do the rest. However, after the first week they came to me and said, “We don't want to do this. We like making quilts.”

Quilting grew from World War II as Europe was rebuilding. Women from across the country came together and filled a desperate need and quilting became an institution even long after the initial need was met.

Not to pick on quilters, as they still do great work, but rather to make a point. We fall in love with what we used to do even when what we used to do no longer serves the need of the day. The need had been quilts, now it is bandages. But we get addicted to what we are doing even after what we are doing is no longer necessary. This is how addiction works and this is how we and the church can grow irrelevant and die.

*Lord, how am I trapped in old thinking? How is my old thinking keeping me from serving new concerns?  
Please help me to have new eyes, to see the needs of the day and respond with love and faithfulness.  
Amen*