

Two things happened this week; read this book, written by a South African, former journalist, now research fellow at Stellenbosch University and author of several books. The book, part memoir part deconstruction of faith.

I came to faith through the 12-step programme, which is nothing short of salvation for dummies. It shows us how to approach our lives in simple steps, that it suggests, are taken chronologically.

The principles are –

- it's a programme of action, armchair theorists don't count,
- you never arrive, you must journey daily,
- expect only progress, not perfection,
- clean only your own house, however obvious it is that your neighbour lives in an absolute tip,
- It works if you work it, so work it you're worth it.

Millions of people from every section of every society around the world, regardless of race, position, gender, religious persuasion or not – can testify to being freed from addictions that are described as obsessions of the mind and a deathly malady of the soul.

Three-person'd God. We stand in awe of your majesty. Stunned into silence and breathless at your nearness. All of creation is pregnant with your spirit, at once transcendent, incarnate and intimate. You know all, are ever present and all mighty. You know our hearts and see all that we do. We are naked before you.

We confess that we feel overwhelmed by the relentless suffering we see and hear about each day. We are devastated by the grand scale of injustice globally.

All of creation groans for your redeeming touch. The church, your body, is fractured. We come before you silently, acknowledging that your message of hope has been weaponized by many, over too long, to control, to other, to oppress, to kill.

Grant us humility to acknowledge our capacity to be complicit. Guide us into surrendering our will to you that we may be instruments in your hands. Grant us courage to have the difficult conversations that are vital to set us free from deception. Grant us wisdom to discern your guidance and compassion to be vulnerable to our neighbour's pain, so that we can live generously, knowing that all we need is provided by you.

Resurrect in us the will to act in accordance with your plan and grant us enough foolishness to believe we can be your instruments in spreading your grace to all your children.

Thank you for the hope inspired by the knowledge that you have already begun your transforming work in us. Fan in us the passion to participate with you to bring peace, justice and an end to oppression. Amen – so be it!