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**STEP 2** – Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

**SUPPORTING VERSE:** *For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.*

- *Philippians 2:13*

**STORY/PARABLE:** **Jesus Restores a Demon-Possessed Man - Mark 5:1-17 (NIV)**

They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He shouted at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God’s name don’t torture me!” For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this man, you impure spirit!”

Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

“My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.” <sup>10</sup>And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, “Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.” He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

**THE REVELATION OF HOPE**

If we've successfully completed Step 1, we have begun to understand *where we are* in our journey to become the man God designed us to be – *we are powerless and we can't save ourselves*. We've accepted that our lives have become *unmanageable*, as evidenced by the negative consequences we've suffered and made a list of. We've thoroughly reviewed *our story* and written out an outline as to how our self-designed strategies and efforts resulted in bringing us to this spiritual state of disorder and chaos. If we're completely honest, we've admitted that our lives, at best are disordered, and at worst have included a certain measure of *insanity*.

We accept responsibility for our choices and how they have brought us to this place and time in our lives. We are beginning to understand the gravity of the destruction and harm we've caused to ourselves and others. While we still may feel imprisoned and tortured by our addictions, this is where and when we begin to discover HOPE. As we turn our eyes away from ourselves (our own selfishness and self-centeredness), we realize the HOPE that God could *restore us to sanity* if we are willing to humbly admit our dilemma and ask for his help.

Insanity is the act of doing the same thing over and over again while expecting a different result. Our thinking has become disordered in this way and we need it brought back into proper order if we are going to recover and become the man God designed us to be. If we could have restored order to our thinking *on our own power*, wouldn't we already have done so? But we can't...so we haven't. Our list of Negative Consequences that we completed in Step One is evidence of this. Look again at that list. Doesn't it accurately represent what our best thinking has produced? This fact reveals our deep need for help from a "*power greater than ourselves*." God...our Father, his Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit is that power. Coming to *BELIEVE* that God can do this is the miracle of Step Two and the beginning of the HOPE of a new and better life ahead.

***Do you believe it?***

**ENGAGE AND DISCUSS**

1. How would you describe the demoniac's emotional state?

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2. Describe some of the *negative consequences* of the demoniac's behavior.

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3. How does the demoniac express his desire to be healed by Jesus?

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4. If the demoniac has the power to break the chains that he keeps being bound with, why is he so tormented? Why does he beg Jesus *not* to torture him anymore?

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5. What is the evidence of and how would you describe the demoniac's newly, healed state?

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6. What does/would it feel like to be restored to sanity?

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**WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE?**

1. God Is Infinite – He is Self-Existing, Without Origin
2. God Is Immutable – He Never Changes
3. God Is Self-Sufficient – He Has No Needs
4. God is Omnipotent – He Is All Powerful
5. God Is Omniscient – He Is All-Knowing
6. God Is Omnipresent – He Is Always Everywhere
7. God Is Wise – He Is Full of Perfect, Unchanging Wisdom
8. God Is Faithful – He Is Infinitely, Unchangingly True
9. God Is Good – He Is Infinitely, Unchangingly Kind and Full of Good Will
10. God Is Just – He Is Infinitely, Unchangeably Right and Perfect in All He Does
11. God Is Merciful – He is Infinitely, Unchangeably Compassionate and Kind
12. God Is Gracious – God Is Infinitely Inclined to Spare the Guilty
13. God Is Loving – God Infinitely, Unchangingly Loves Us
14. God Is Holy – He is Infinitely, Unchangingly Perfect
15. God Is Glorious – He is Infinitely Beautiful and Great

SOURCE: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/15-amazing-attributes-of-god-what-they-mean-and-why-they-matter.html>

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “BELIEVE” IN GOD?**

TO BELIEVE something means to “come into \_\_\_\_\_” with the concept as being TRUE.

Based on what we KNOW about God, can you come into \_\_\_\_\_ that GOD’S POWER is sufficient to meet our emotional, physical and spiritual needs?

Can we come into \_\_\_\_\_ that God CAN and WILL do for us what we \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_?

**RESTORING ORDER, RESTORING SANITY**

What is the EVIDENCE that your life needs to be “restored to sanity?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are some of the things that need to be brought back into order or be restored in your life?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I’ve included some additional reading along with two suggested exercises below that will help you take Step 2. Both the readings and the exercises will assist in reviewing your own state of willingness and your desire for healing in your life, bringing it into the reality of the present physical realm. These exercises should be done on paper, hand-written and kept for future reference in your Recovery Notebook. They should also be discussed with your sponsor, guide or a close friend. God has a special purpose for the material in these exercises that He will reveal to you as you move through the 12 Steps *into a life of recovery, redemption and restoration*.

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

- **READ:** 12 Steps and 12 Traditions - Step 2 (pages 25 - 33)
- **READ:** Alcoholics Anonymous "Big Book" –
  - Chapter Two: More About Alcoholism
  - Chapter Three: How It Works
  - Chapter Four: We Agnostics

**STEP TWO EXERCISES**

As an exercise to help you complete Step 2, write out a “Help Wanted” ad for your God, your Higher Power.

**EXERCISE ONE: HELP WANTED AD FOR YOUR HIGHER POWER**

What do you want from God as your “Higher Power?” How would you expect to learn to trust him? What sort of interactive give and take between yourself and your Higher power would you expect? Write this out as a “Help Wanted” ad so you’ll know exactly what you are looking for. Pray and ask God to reveal himself as you write out your ad. Here’s a sample to help your thought process...

**WANTED: A power greater than myself to help me stay sober. Must be readily available and care about my health and wellbeing. Must understand the nature of my addiction. Must be nonjudgmental about my past. Must be available 24/7 for guidance and encouragement, Etc.**

Include any specific needs that are unique to YOU as a person or unique to your specific addiction. God cares about the details of your inner and out life and wants to be invited into those details.

Once you’ve identified your Higher Power and he has been hired, the you can begin the process of accepting help from him. If you are having a hard time believing in a God of the Universe or in Jesus Christ as Lord, you might find it helpful to simply start by allowing the actual group of people in a 12-step fellowship, a sponsor, a therapist, friends in recovery, or pastor act as your “Higher Power” as you start your journey – that’s fine. The key to this step is to refocus your spiritual eyes AWAY from self as the source or power in your life and outward, towards others and to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as the ultimate *Highest Power* available to mankind.

*<sup>15</sup> The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.*

– Colossians 1:15-18

DO NOT type this exercise on a computer, mobile phone or electronic device. It is most powerful and effective when *handwritten*. Be detailed and thorough.

**HELP WANTED AD FOR MY HIGHER POWER**

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1. When you communicate in prayerful conversation with your Higher Power, what will you call him?

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2. Consider how different your Higher Power IS from the things you've turned to in your addiction (porn, sex, pills, alcohol, marijuana, gambling, over-eating, anger, controlling others, etc.). How would you describe some of the marked differences between the two?

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#### **EXERCISE TWO: ACCEPTING GUIDANCE FROM YOUR HIGHER POWER**

Now that you've identified (the triune) God as your Higher Power, it is time to begin trusting him as you progress along your journey of recovery. Oftentimes this starts with simple accountability to a sponsor, mentor or guide. For instance, the addict *agrees to attend a recovery meeting five times per week and check in with his or her sponsor on a daily basis, and the addict agrees to immediately call someone anytime he or she has thoughts of relapse*. Your sponsor or guide may have other commitments he suggests that you take based on his knowledge of your specific personality, addiction or struggle. Usually it takes very little time for addicts to reach the conclusion that, indeed, accepting help from a power greater than themselves is a very good idea, and once they do reach this conclusion, maintaining sobriety becomes much, much easier.

The key to this exercise is to consider your level of *willingness* to do as your sponsor suggests and to trust the voice of *JESUS IN YOUR SPONSOR* as you listen and follow his suggestions. Of course, it goes without saying that your sponsor's suggestions and guidance must always align with God's word and the law of the land.

1. Who is the person you have in your life that is willing to help you along the way in your recovery journey? This can be a formal "sponsor," a mentor, pastor or spiritual guide. We recommend someone who is:
  - a. ...a mature Christ-follower
  - b. ...is farther along in their journey of recovery than you are
  - c. ...is someone that you can trust explicitly

My SPONSOR/MENTOR/GUIDE is: \_\_\_\_\_

His PHONE NUMBER is: \_\_\_\_\_

His EMAIL ADDRESS is: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are two or three simple daily/weekly activities your SPONSOR/MENTOR/GUIDE has suggested that you commit to in pursuit of your sobriety?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

3. Can you and will you completely commit to these activities and accept his help, guidance and correction moving forward?

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have answered in the affirmative, you have now completed STEP TWO and are ready to proceed to STEP THREE.

**The DATE that I completed STEP TWO is:** \_\_\_\_\_