

STEP 1 - WE ADMITTED WE HAD BECOME POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL OR THE SUBSTANCE WE HAD ABUSED (ALCOHOLIC OR THE SUBSTANCE ABUSER) AND THAT OUR LIVES WERE UNMANAGEABLE.

This step states that the substance abuser is not only powerless over the substance he has abused, but (left to himself) he is not capable of managing his own life. The truth is, that no one is capable of managing his own life without God.

The following scriptures will show us that without God to manage our lives, we can never obtain any real measure of peace or happiness.

ISAIAH 1:5 & 6 - Why should you be beaten anymore? Why do you persist in rebellion? Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted. From the soul of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness - only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil.

Can you identify with this Scripture?

GALATIANS 5:19-23 - The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

1. What is a definition of the "sinful nature"?
2. What are the differences between "acts" and "fruit"? Do both proceed from the heart of man? (Mark 7:21)
3. When we depend on ourselves, which do we manifest, the "acts" of the sinful nature or the "fruit" of the Spirit?

GENESIS 4:7 - "If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

1. If I know the right thing to do and don't do it, who is to blame?
2. How does sin gain control in our lives? Give an example.
3. Have we been successful at mastering sin by ourselves?

ROMANS 3:10 & 23 - As it is written: "There is none righteous, not even one." -- For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

1. What is the meaning of "righteousness"?
2. Can we achieve "righteousness" on our own?
3. Are we all equally guilty? Can we all be equally righteous?

JAMES 2:10 - For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

1. Have you ever tried to be really good? How long did it last?
2. If what this Scripture says is true, who can possibly make it?

PROVERBS 14:12 - There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

1. What do you think is "the way that seems right to a man"?
2. Is "the way that seems right to a man" the same as "doing our own thing"?
3. Is this Scripture saying that we aren't able to manage our own lives?

2 CORINTHIANS 1:9 - Indeed in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

1. Did you ever experience guilt and remorse when you were drinking?
2. Have we felt the "sentence of death" in our hearts? How is this related to being powerless?

ROMANS 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1. Substitute "doing my own thing" for the word "sin"; is this a true statement?
2. How do the words "wages" and "gift" differ?
3. What is the penalty for sin? How can we escape it?

JOHN 8:34-36 - Jesus replied "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

1. What do you think being a "slave to sin" means?
2. Can we be "set free" and be "slaves" at the same time?
3. Am I still a slave to sin?

ROMANS 7:5 & 6 - For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the Law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we may serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

1. What were we controlled by? What should we be controlled by? Are all people controlled by something?
2. How are we released from the law? How permanent is it?

ROMANS 7:18-20 - I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

1. Are we still trying to be good? Is it possible?
2. Do you desire to do what is right? If so, can you carry it out?
3. Substitute "compulsion to do it my way" for the word "sin"; is this a true statement?

ROMANS 7:24 & 25 - What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

1. Can we as Christians still be in this place sometimes?
2. Is it easy to serve two masters? Can Jesus rescue us from this dilemma?
3. What is our only hope?

ROMANS 8:1 & 2 - Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

1. If there is "no condemnation", why do we still sometimes feel condemned?
2. What does God promise will happen after we invite Jesus to be Lord of our lives?
3. How can I keep on condemning myself if Christ has set me free?

ROMANS 8:9 & 10 - You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.

1. Since we are not controlled by the sinful nature when Jesus is Lord of our lives, what are we controlled by?
2. If I am not controlled by the sinful nature, why do I still have habits that I can't master?

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13 & 14 - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

1. Does the Lord tempt us? What is the difference between "tempting" and "testing"?
2. Should we panic when temptation comes? Should we condemn ourselves? Should we rely on God and his word?
3. When the temptation to drink or use drugs comes at us, what does God promise he will do for us?

1 PETER 5:6 & 7 - Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

1. When worry and anxiety come upon us, what should we do to be lifted up, and why?
2. How do we humble ourselves before God?
3. Is it up to us to humble ourselves?
4. What does the Scripture mean by "in due time"?

PROVERBS 3:5-8 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

1. How often should we turn to the Lord? Why shouldn't we lean on "our own understanding"?
2. What are God's conditions for health and recovery?

"ONCE I WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE!"