1. **Introduction**
   1. First we learned in Step 1 – “that we are powerless over our addictions, brokenness and sinful patterns – that in our own power our lives are unmanageable.”
   2. Now, we are going to talk about Step 2. Step 2 is “We come to believe that God is the one whose power can fully restore us.”
      1. Step 1 is “I can’t.”
      2. Step 2 is “God can.”
2. **Text**: The Scripture that this is based on is from Psalm 103:2-5 *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s*
   1. Did you hear what God’s benefits are? Forgives sin. Heals diseases. Redeems life. Gives love and mercy. Satisfies you with good. Renews your youth.
   2. I can’t do any of that by myself. But God can. And that’s why we need Him…
3. **Need**: Why do we need God? Because we are under the weight of sin and this life is a burden we can’t carry.
4. **Subject**: So tonight, we’re going to talk about who God is/that He alone is able/and the necessity of a personal belief in Him
5. **Illustration**: Carrying around something heavy (like a barbell or big rock) starts off easy, but quickly gets uncomfortable.
   1. This is what our life is like – trying to carry around something heavy and weighty.
   2. This adds a burden to our life.
6. **Our Problem**
   1. We cannot manage the impossible weight of sin and the burden of life.
      1. My sinful choices and inability to quit adding them on
         1. alcoholism, drugs, pills, (add weights)
         2. sex, porn, lust, (add weights)
         3. pride, materialism, money, status, boasting
         4. control, binging, lying, (add weights)
      2. Or others’ sins against me, fallen world, decisions I can’t make
         1. Was sexually abused when I was a little kid
         2. When they hurt me, I have unforgiveness, rage, hatred (add weights)
   2. And the reason why we can’t is that we were never intended to carry it.
      1. I wasn’t created to carry the burden of sin; but to be in relationship with God.
         1. Good works don’t remove my sin.
         2. Just like a judge doesn’t let a murderer off the hook if he can prove he was a boy scout and picked up litter.
      2. Until I’m in relationship with God, the weight of this world will be increasingly crushing
         1. Matthew 11:28-30 - *Come to me all you who are weary and burdened/heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*
         2. The yoke of the world is hard and heavy. You’ll have one or the other.
7. **Solution**
   1. God is the one whose power can fully restore us, Step 2
      1. God alone *is the One.*
         1. I didn’t use to believe God had anything to do with anything. I was a deist. I thought God exists but He certainly didn’t have anything to do with me and wouldn’t help me.
         2. I thought the Bible was just an old book of stories and rules. That Jesus was a historical figure and that God was distant and impersonal.
         3. And thus, I was left carrying this huge, impossible burden all by myself.
      2. You’re carrying a load too. So, you have to decide for yourself – does God exist and who is the one true God? I can tell you. And will. But you must personally decide. I can’t do Step 2 for you. I can tell you, but you have to believe
         1. And we know there must be a God because of the intelligent design of all that exists:
         2. some/nothing, life/non-life, order/chaos, morality, eternity in hearts – something more…we are more than just a compilation of cells and blood.
         3. But just because you believe in something doesn’t mean it that it is. ***GOOD PLACE TO INSERT A PERSONAL STORY***.
         4. While you consider who God is – here are some things to consider:
            1. The bible: written by 40 authors over 1500 years and it fits perfectly together with one story - God’s redemption of man and not a single contradiction.
            2. Other holy books? Versus one guy who says he heard from God. Versus 40 didn’t know each other?!
            3. The Bible claims to be the very words of God and says other gods and religions are false deceptions to lead people away from the one true God.
            4. Muhammad, Confucius, and Buddha only claimed to be prophets or teachers. They are all buried in tombsthat you can visit today. They were just men. Claimed they knew what was awaiting after death, but can we trust them?
            5. Jesus alone claimed He was God. But if someone claims to be God they better back it up.
            6. And He healed the sick, raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, performed miracles and was raised from the dead and the tomb is empty.
      3. God alone has the power
         1. He is holy, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-present and just. SCARY HUH?
         2. He is loving. Merciful. Compassionate. Good. He is your Creator. He alones forgives sin.
      4. God alone can restore us
         1. Not just forgive sins
         2. Not just immortality and heaven when you die
         3. He wants to restore you to what He originally created you to be and have a relationship with you.
            1. He doesn’t want to make you better; He wants to make you (2 Corinthians 5:17)
            2. Eternal abundant life now – today! (see John 10:10)
8. **So What Do We Do?**:
   1. Believe. Believe that God is the ONE whose power can restore us.
      1. Knowledge and Belief are two different things.
         1. And you may not be there yet; I wasn’t always either.
         2. What brought me to Him was the desperation that I couldn’t live life.
         3. You can know he’s there and still not personally believe.
   2. ILLUSTRATION: *Bench.* You must come sit on the bench.
      1. You must believe that you cannot bear this weight of sin on your own
      2. And you must believe that there is a God who can restore you.
      3. But not just any god or a god of your own understanding or that you’ve been taught; but the God; the God who truly is.
      4. It’s critical that I know the one & only Person to call upon who *is* and *has the power. Because this life and eternity hang are hanging in the balance.*
      5. Let me show you what my life looked like when I came to Step 2.
         1. And so if I were to have this weight upon me (lifting weight, trying it and then tiring….and resting on chest)
         2. I always thought there was a God. Sure, I know that I’m a sinner. But you must make that knowledge personal and make it faith.
         3. Begin praying: “God I believe you’re real. You are the one true God. You formed me and love me. I believe you’re holy, just, good and loving. God, I believe you can restore me. I believe in You, God. Help.” (*Weight lifts it off).*
9. **Refresh Illustration**: All of you are carrying weight – of your sin and the hurts from others. You all have an unbearable load upon your shoulders. This is a spiritual reality. And only God can lift it. You can’t. But He can. Do you believe in the one true God? Do you believe in Him, personally, for you – for your weight? Not just knowing about Him as a theological concept, but personally for you? He loves you. He is here for you.