

Gerald Beldon

March, 2004

Gerald was first witnessed to by Jay Kantola, one of our recovery group members, while in Los Angeles County Jail. Through a series of events, Jay led Gerald to Christ, and gave him some materials to get him started in the Christian life, such as "The Purpose Driven Life" and a few other books, and some of our Bible study papers. Gerald has been writing to us for about a year now. Here's what he wrote in one of his letters as he began to work the 12-Steps with our materials: "Man, my life in the fast lane sure was wild! I did not realize how screwed up I am until I started doing the 12-Steps. It's taken me two days to answer these questions, and I am still in denial. I didn't think there was anything wrong with the way I was living. I have been in denial, anger, frustration, resentment. Everything 12-Step recovery talks about, I am guilty! I have never taken a seems-like-a-test like this before. Sure is a wake up! I never cared what anybody said or thought because all my friends, with few exceptions, were "loadies" and they did the same things that I did - drinking and drugs. Well, it finally got me and I am in prison because I wouldn't stop, because there was a terrible accident that almost killed my wife, because of my drunkenness. What a wake up that was! Thank God she is okay and still loves me - I could have accidentally killed her. It took something that bad to put me in prison to look at my crazy lifestyle of guns, drugs, drinking, never really caring. I never wanted to hurt anybody, but was out of control of my life. Drinking and guns don't mix! I knew that, but I was way too lost. The questions in Steps 1-2-3 I didn't even like reading, that's how bad it was. What a struggle just getting through that - honestly, I am screwed up! But I will make it. It sure opens your eyes, and that's why it was hard. I never cared about much of anything as long as I was in control, and I don't think I ever was (in control) in the past 30 years."

"Well, I just finished Step 2 of the 12 Step recovery. I sure have a hard time writing the answers, because in my life, none of these things ever mattered to me. I do think that what I'm learning is right, and I know it is after I answer questions and read them back later and ask myself, "Is that really me writing these things that I seem to know?" Why do I seem to have such a hard time with this? I know, it's like having a fight going on inside. Satan's way of life came easy for me. Before, looking at the way I lived wasn't so bad, even though it did put me in prison, because I thought there was nothing wrong with it. You know, maybe it wasn't Satan that put me in prison. I do believe God did not want me to die without knowing Him or His Son, and He gave me the chance to know Him. I must be loved to be given this chance. Sometimes a hardheaded person like me needs to realize I'm not being punished, I'm being saved and given a second chance. You know, prison and God both teach people how to live if you give it a chance. I would still be living the same way I was, but prison shows and teaches a lesson on what I was doing and the way I was living. God wants people to see their mistakes, so if prison is what it takes, He has a way to open people's eyes, but some people never learn. I am struggling every day, I do know that. Satan wants me to throw all these papers in the trash - believe me, he does not let go easy! I'm fighting while I write this."