

the new . . . Terry Snyder

I came to Spencer County in 2010. At the time, I didn't know it was part of God's plan. He had to put me in Spencer County so I could meet the people and programs that would finally lead me to Him.

I was born a "New Year's Baby" in 1960. In Sullivan, Indiana, where I spent most of my teenage years, my family owned a tavern and lounge. At 15, I had my first minor consumption charge. From there, my next step in decline was my arrest for arson at age 25. I cannot tell you how many DWI's I've had, but in Sullivan, my family either bought me out of them or I ran.

In 1995 I married a wonderful (straight) woman from Philpot, Kentucky. We were married for 15 years. In a minute, I'm going to tell you how God changes hearts and works in your life once you give it all to Him. First, let me tell you how our marriage ended. February 2, 2009 we had been without power for two weeks because of the ice storm. Finally, someone loaned us a generator. However, the night I was trying to hook it up, I was drunk. Shir's youngest son was trying to get me to wait until I was sober. One thing led to another, until I stabbed him with a screwdriver. He was 31 years old, and a big boy, but that doesn't change what happened. I left home that night. In December of the same year I was arrested in Sullivan for Meth possession and other related charges. I was released, but later that month I was arrested again, this time in Spencer County. I made bail on January 21, 2010, but was arrested on February 15 for cooking Meth. If I had been arrested in Sullivan County, I believe I would have been sent to prison. But Spencer County put Brett Cieslack and *The Way* into my life.

I was at *The Way* for 9 months, and still didn't "get it." I was going to church 3 times a week and cooking twice a week for Celebration Station. Every week I went for counseling at Southern Hills, and attended two Celebrate Recovery meetings. *Every day* at our home (*The Way*) I cooked for all of us. And I helped Brett too, with all kinds of things. But all I was really doing was killing 18 months of Drug Court so I could move out of Spencer County. I wanted to move someplace that would let me drink on probation. I still didn't realize what *The Way* was all about. February 22, 2012 Brett gave me a weekend pass. I went to Sullivan, drank, and was arrested. Making bail, I went back to Rockport, where the judge threw me back in jail - for a *misdemeanor* DWI! After all the good things I had done for Rockport and *The Way*, why would he do that to me, Terry Snyder!?

My first two months in the Spencer County lock-up I spent reading my Bible, but I was angry because I just couldn't understand how they could put me back in jail after all the wonderful things I had done for the county. The next two months I quit just reading my Bible, and began to study it and to pray. My prayers went from "God, get me out of here, and I'll do *anything* You want," to "If it's Your will, God, for me to spend 17 years in prison, just use me to help You." The next month, July 5, 2012, the judge let me out for another chance. Brett took me straight from the jail to the church. We went up to the altar where I gave it all to God.

Since that day, God has given me more than I ever could have thought possible! Now I *know* what *The Way* is really about. It was always here. *The Way* gives you all the tools you need to make it. I have been an alcoholic my whole life. The entire nine months I was here before, I craved alcohol every day. But since the day I gave myself to God I have not had one craving for alcohol. God's first gift to me was my salvation. And I wasn't deserving of that, let alone everything else He has given me.

Let's go back to February 2, 2009. Since I gave the Lord control of my life, He has changed more than my own heart. Shir and I are back together. Her son and I are very close again. And I know a love for life that I never knew was possible. Even bad days aren't really bad anymore. I am looking so forward to serving God the rest of my life. I want to thank any and all people who were involved in getting *The Way* started. It has changed my life in a way I never could have dreamed.

I honestly consider *The Way* program the foundation of my spiritual growth. It was *The Way* that introduced me to the Church of the Nazarene. My wife and I plan to make it our life-long church. We both love it.

I don't know where God will take me from here. But I do know that I will enjoy the journey.

