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April 2018

II THESSALONIANS

Inside Terry's Office:

The Book of II Thessalonians; Who is the "Man of Lawlessness"?

Paul is writing to a persecuted community and encouraging their faithful focus on loving God and each other. He doesn't deny the difficulties they face as people try to persuade them with physical violence and constant arguments to turn from their faith. In effect, Paul tells them that the anti-Christ atmosphere they are living in will get even worse; when the Anti-Christ arrives. The Anti-Christ will someday be established in the Temple (within 'The Holy of Holies'). He will win arguments and demand loyalty based on his ability to work miracles. Everyone who does not love the truth will be drawn into this 'powerful delusion'.

Everyone who does not love the truth will be drawn into this 'powerful delusion'.

And furthermore, **Everyone who does not love the truth will be drawn into this 'powerful delusion'.**

What truth? Do I love the truth? As a concept? Or, is Paul referring to loving the Gospel of Jesus Christ? I have heard/read teachings asserting both. Yet, I believe that there is a truth that encompasses all Truth and lays the foundation for the Gospel of Jesus that will protect us from the lies of "The Man of Lawlessness".

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

There is a creator God (I don't care HOW you think He did it). This truth protects us from 'the great delusion'. Indeed, there is a creator God and you are not him. Do you love that truth?

I love the truth that the creator God knows best what is good for me. He is the creator after all.

I love the truth that the creator God loves me and wants to be with me. That's why He created.

I love the truth that I can value justice, but I can't create it.

I love the truth that I can value mercy, but I can't create it.

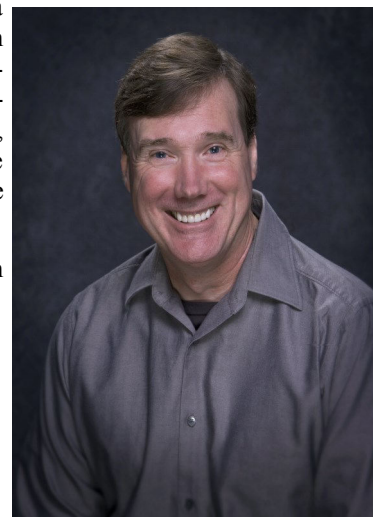
I love the truth that I can value love, but I can't create it.

All I am really asked to do is love the truth that there is a creator God. Then, according to Paul in II Thessalonians, we may suffer or prosper in the midst of anti-Christ, but we won't fall for the 'great delusion'. We may follow all that we've been taught or wander aimlessly, but we won't follow the anti-Christ. We may joyously embrace our work and callings, or take way too many naps, but we will always be counted as part of the Creator's family. And, of course, the gospel of Jesus Christ finds a welcoming heart in the believers in a creator God.

As counter-intuitive as it may seem, As soon as we take responsibility for Truth or Love or Righteousness of any kind, we begin falling for the great delusion. As we trust that there is a God who created the earth and every good thing, we can relax into our own salvation and sanctification through Christ and continue our efforts toward every good thing because we share those value with God. If we begin to believe that can/should CREATE/sustain/be responsible for justice, truth, love, etc. we will find ourselves listening to that "other guy" who wants to do those things in His own way (remember that the Anti-Christ positions himself in the Temple!), resulting in 'every form of wickedness'.

So, let us together proclaim the truth we love, beginning with, "I believe in God, the Father, Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth!"

In His Grip, TWE



ESTABLISHING A PLUMBLINE IN THE HEART OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The Plumbline

**Live Now with Then
in View**

*I created you for a kind of joy, an unmitigated sheer delight, that you cannot **now** experience. If you don't live **now** with **then** in view, you will move through life with a self-focused demand to have things go your way, to find relief from a misery you cannot escape. (Crabb, 66 Love Letters, Love Letter 53)*

Focal passage: II Thessalonians 2:13;15-17 The Voice

13b *We cannot help but thank God for you at all times, because from the beginning He handpicked you for salvation **through the Spirit's sanctifying work** and your belief in the truth.*

15 *So, brothers and sisters, all you need to do **now** is **stand firm and hold tight** to the line of teachings we have passed on to you, whether in person or in a letter. **16-17 Now** may our Lord Jesus (the Anointed One Himself) and God our Father (who has loved us, comforted us eternally, and given us a good hope by His grace) bring comfort to your hearts and strengthen your wills to accomplish every good work and word.*

Sometimes God gives you a small picture in which to have a glimpse of the bigger picture. Many years ago, 20+ as a matter of fact, I had reached a point of discontentment within our ministry and I wanted out. I remember telling Rob at the supper table with our three young girls that I was ready for him to get a "real job!" Looking back at that moment I could totally relate to Crabb's statement above that "If you don't live *now* with *then* in view, you will move through life with a self-focused demand to have things go your way, to find relief from a misery you

cannot escape." I cannot tell you today what exactly was going on back then but I can guarantee that I was not getting the results I wanted, things were not going my way. Again, I do not remember the details of what happened to cause me to change my mind but I do remember clearly thinking that for right *now* this is where God has me and us and for what He has called me He will provide me with everything I need to see this through and that He did!

In this small book of II Thessalonians you can sense the urgency of Paul to urge the believers to not give up in the midst of increasing persecution against the gatherings of the young believers. I cannot even presume to be able to compare what we experience now in America with what was happening during this period in Macedonia! With that being said, it is nonetheless familiar for me to hear the lament of how hard it is to live out the calling of *now*. I believe it was Henry Cloud that I heard say one time, "We have met the enemy and the enemy is us." Sometimes I think that our living out our calling in the *now* is made more difficult by our own self-persecution. I have no doubt that much of my exasperation with ministry had to do with growing tired of trying to live up to self-imposed expectations. Emily P. Freeman, author of *Grace for the Good Girl* says this about herself, "I lived as a believer in God but I did not live life *from God*."

I believe the verses I selected above from II Thessalonians chapter 2 reflect the heart of Paul's message to those of us who struggle to live out our calling in the face of persecution whether external or internal which impedes our *living life from God*. In chapter 1 Paul says, "11b God will make you worthy of the *great* calling you have received from Him and will give you the power to accomplish every good intention and work of faith." In chapter 3 Paul

addresses the value of working which is a present time (*now*) action. In verse 13 of chapter 3 Paul says, "Never grow tired of doing good."

Think about it! Wherever you are is *Now!* And in the *Now* [1:11] "God will give you power to accomplish every good intention and work of faith. *THEN* [1:12] the great name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified through your lives, and you will be glorified in Him according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus, the Anointed One, our *Liberating King*."

Carol Anne





Panera Fundraising

HELP SUPPORT

PLUMBLINE MINISTRIES, INC,

WHERE: 7547 A South Olympia Avenue
Tulsa, Oklahoma

WHEN: Wednesday, May 30th

FROM: 4 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Bring this flyer or show an electronic version to the cashier when you place your order and we'll donate a portion of the proceeds from your purchase.
Gift card purchases and catering are not counted towards the event.

Learn more at PANERABREAD.com/Fundraiser

Ordering online? Try Rapid Pick-Up or Delivery.

Enter promo codes "Fund" at check out to have a portion of your proceeds donated to your organization.



PLUMBLINE CLASSROOM TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

The Classroom Transformation Project is just one of the projects we are currently working toward at Plumblime.

What is the Classroom Transformation Project?

OUR VISION: To transform the existing classroom into a warm and welcoming living room type environment to allow class members to feel comfortable, encouraging emotional growth.

REQUIREMENTS: This project will include pain, lighting, upgrades to the wall décor, adding a pass through bar counter in the kitchen, window treatments, transform the floor coverings, and furniture upgrades at a minimum.

BUDGET: The overall budget for this project is \$15,000 to include all items.

TIMELINE: Once the funds have been acquired, the project will be scheduled and completed.

ASKING: We are seeking donations to assist us in completing this Classroom Transformation Project.

VOLUNTEERS: Additional ways to assist will be by volunteering your time and expertise when the actual work begins.

Would you partner with us for this project?

Donations can be sent to Plumblime Ministries, Inc. [8222 E 103rd Street, Tulsa, OK 74133](https://www.plumblime.org).

All donations are Tax Deductible.

Stickman's Prayers

Plumblin's newest book, *Stickman's Prayers* has been published and is now available at Plumblin!

stickman's prayers

the everyday practice of
"loosing prayers"
and the ministry of
"exploratory prayers"



Michelle Carpenter
Terry Ewing
Erin Garcia
Margo Hanne
Carolyn Knippers
Carol McNamarra
Sue Merrill

Would you be surprised to know that the "Prayer of Jabez" was a joke?

Would you be happy to know what kind of prayers are appropriate for you to pray for yourself and what kinds are meant for you to pray for others and others for you?

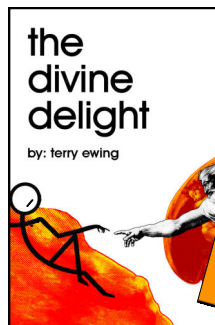
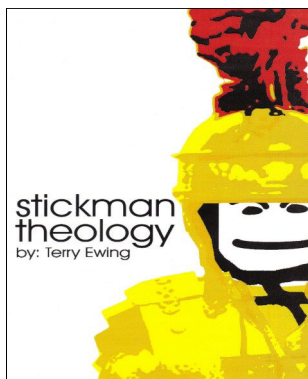
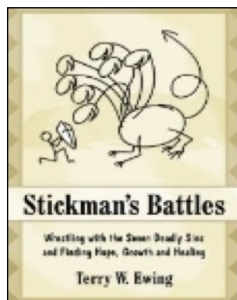
Would you like confidence and freedom to simply enjoy your personal and ministry prayers?

Praying is the most natural thing in the world for Christians; an on going conversation with our best friend, counselor, and confidant; gratitude to our Savior and provider; intercession on behalf of our friends; requests to our Creator. In this regard, a book on prayer may seem presumptuous. When you write a book on Prayer aren't you suggesting that some are praying wrongly, or, at least could be praying better?

That really is not the kind of message we look to promote. So...why the book?

The *Stickman's Prayers* serves two purposes. First, to challenge some ideas that other teaching and preaching concerning prayer has promoted. And, to offer simple encouragements to personal prayer and prayer ministries.

Available at Plumblin for a suggested donation of \$10.00 each



Did you know you can download

Stickman Theology

On your KINDLE?

Did you know that when you shop on Amazon, you could be helping to financially support Plumblin? Through the Amazon smiles program, **Amazon will donate a portion of the sales to Plumblin.** All you need to do is go to smiles.amazon.com, designate Plumblin Ministries, and start shopping! Amazon will then donate 0.5% of the total sales price to Plumblin. Please remember to bookmark that page and you can help us as you shop!

PLUMBLINE

MINISTRIES

8222 E. 103rd St

Suite 127

Tulsa, OK 74133

