

# LUKE

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ESTABLISHING A PLUMBLINE IN THE HEART OF GOD'S PEOPLE

# The Plumbline

## *Inside Terry's Office:*

### *The Book of Luke- Miracles Confirming Miracles!*

The first chapter of Luke is one of my favorite in all of scripture. This first chapter contains two stories that have changed my world!

As most of you probably already know, my primary spiritual gifting is prophecy. In my case, this gifting manifests mostly as profound convictions of theological, emotional, and relational perspectives Notice: I said 'perspectives', not 'truths'; although I must represent them as truths because they are my profound convictions. This is the dilemma of being prophetic.

Therefore, I learned early (through a long series of hard knocks) that "the words of the prophet are subject to the prophet"; meaning, I should choose carefully how I say what I say and often not say anything at all. Meanwhile, priests (the institutional version of prophets) are given greater latitude to inspire and encourage their congregants even when they contradict themselves theologically, emotionally, and/or relationally within their own sermons. (I know that last statement sounds resentful, but I really don't intend it that way; I believe it is simply a true statement.)

Soooooo, the story of a priest, Zechariah, being struck dumb, is especially appealing to me. When the angel, Gabriel, told Zechariah that he would have a son in his old age he didn't believe him. The result was that Zechariah couldn't proclaim his encounter with the angel until after his son was born. He was a priest, with his most exciting sermon ever, unable to preach!

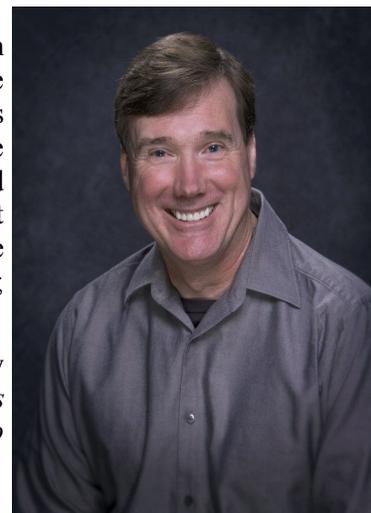
While waiting for Zechariah's son (who would be known as John the Baptist) to be born, the second story takes place. When Elizabeth (pregnant with John) encounters Mary (pregnant with Jesus), her baby (John) leapt **within her womb** in recognition of Jesus residing **within Mary's womb!** There can be no more direct evidence of the miracle of life within the womb. John, in his second or third trimester within the womb, recognized Jesus, early in the first trimester in Mary's womb. When Elizabeth recognized the truth of Mary's situation, Mary broke out in a song of praise. Mary knew she was in a safe place with safe people who would believe her story of being told **by an angel** that she would bear a son although she was a virgin.

I'm relating these stories because of how wisely and lovingly God orchestrated the incarnation of Jesus so that his mother, Mary, was given the encouragements she needed in order not to have an emotional breakdown during her pregnancy. As difficult as it was for a teenager to be pregnant outside of a consummated marriage, God safeguarded Mary's spiritual, emotional, and relational well-being.

These stories, as amazing as they are, are not so different from stories I see play out in my office on a regular basis. People are struggling to make their way through trials, tribulations, and temptations that would be hopeless if God had not provided a safe place and safe people who can walk with them through the weeks and months (and sometimes years) of healing and growth. Like Zechariah, often it is not appropriate for us to tell these stories. Most often, these stories become known when those primarily involved are ready to tell their stories; these are their stories to tell, not ours.

However, we can lift our voices in agreement with the song Mary sang; "...the *Mighty One* has done great things for me – holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation!"

His Grip, TWE



## WISH FORWARD

*“If you miss everything in this letter but one thing, don’t miss this: **My Son wished forward.** Seven times I had Luke record that he prayed, using the word **proseuchomai**, which means ‘to wish forward.’ That is **the core of human maturity in this life. My Son had no greater desire than to carry out His part in My plan.** That is the center of spiritual formation, not more energy, not feeling more upbeat, but a clear awareness of the deepest truly human desire, a desire that **releases resolve, an unflinching determination to follow the lead of My Son in bringing heaven’s kingdom to earth, a longing to love.**” (Larry Crabb, 66 Love Letters, Love Letter Forty-Two: Luke)*

Crabb points out that the first time that it was recorded that Jesus **wished forward** was at His baptism. This is the launch of Jesus’ ministry and his complete surrender to the calling of His Father. Crabb says, **“A perfectly mature person has confidence in the goodness of My [the Father’s] plan and knows no greater desire than to move it ahead.”** Crabb goes on to say **“that perfect maturity feels deeply and loves generously even when life is hard.”**

The Gospel according to Luke is a carefully researched document on the life of Jesus for the purpose of correcting “misinformation being spread about him and to provide the most historically accurate report of Jesus’ ministry possible.” (The Voice commentary on Luke) Luke shows in his writing how Jesus, while being at the same time divine, exemplifies the perfect human being. I recently just saw the movie *The Shack* based on the book by the same name written by Wm. Paul

Young. The movie beautifully captures the encounter that the main character, a distraught father, Mac, has with each member of the Godhead. As Mac sits with Jesus he tells Jesus that he feels the most relaxed when he is with him. Jesus replies, “that’s because I’m human.” Luke’s account is thorough and encourages us to walk like Jesus walked. Jesus message was clear in everything he exemplified and taught, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself.” One thing I think that I will take away from this reflection on Luke is how Jesus taught us to love. To love deeply is to look beneath – to move beyond the outer surface of things.

I love the story of Mary and Martha even though I must confess that I have had a history of reading this account of Jesus’ visit to the home of Mary and Martha with shame. I could relate to Martha scurrying about with preparations and feeling resentful that Mary was chilling while she did all the work. Luke 10:41-42 in *The Voice* reads, “Oh Martha, Martha, you are so anxious and concerned about a million details, but really, only one thing matters. Mary has chosen that one thing, and I won’t take it away from her.” Whereas in the past I have read this as a scornful rebuke from Jesus, I see instead Jesus **wishing forward** for Martha---moving beyond the fretful details to a restful position at the feet of Jesus. Ahhh, what sweet resolve that moves us forward to release control of the details in order to receive from Jesus the next step into spiritual maturity.

Nothing gives me greater joy as a counselor than to see those I counsel making this forward movement beyond the angst of the hurt. So many spin in the process of trying to reconcile the wrongs done and get stuck there. What if the wrongs done

could serve as a motivator to propel them forward to sit at the feet of Jesus and say, “what now Lord?” “Show me Your Way.”

One last note from Luke and that is that only in Luke do we see Jesus’ specific promise of the Holy Spirit, Luke 24:49, “clothed with the power from on high.” Movement toward spiritual maturity requires the movement of the Holy Spirit and that is good news!!

~  
*Carol Anne*



## *A Challenge of Thankfulness*

*There was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man.....(Luke 23:50 NIV)*

You often see on Facebook challenges that are set out by people in the Facebook Community. One of them that has popped up in recent time is that of the challenge of thankfulness, listing daily, for the following 30 days, things they are thankful for. Even though I have not participated in this, mainly because I don't like to feel obligated to come up with something new or clever every day for a month, I think this is, on a personal level, important

for all of us to do. Even though many days are routine and similar from one day to the next, it's important to stop on a daily basis and take inventory of what we are appreciative and thankful for.

At this time of year when we revisit the story of Easter, and the shocking brutality and injustice of the Passion story, it's hard to find something to be thankful for. But then enters Joseph. He bravely comes forward and asks for the body of Jesus, and as best he can, lovingly prepares it for burial and lays it in the tomb. Even though the damage had been done, Joseph put himself forward to take positive steps towards Christ. He was the bright light in what was a very dark day. In this simple loving act, Joseph teaches us that no matter how bad our day may be, there is a bright light somewhere. On these days we may need to look a little harder for it, but if we do, we are able to see the glimmers of hope and grace. We don't have to share these on social media, but it is good to stop and think of all the blessings and good things God brings into our lives. There are always going to be days when it is harder to see the good, but as long as God is there, we are blessed.

What is something you have to be thankful for today?

Taken from *Daily Devotional*, the inspirational writings of Linda Bailey

## Let Me Introduce You to Our Newest Interns

As the intern supervisor and coordinator of the internship program here at Plumblin I am happy to introduce our newest interns who began their Phase I process in January. In order to apply to be a part of the internship program through Plumblin applicants must enter a contractual agreement that they are familiar with and agree with the Plumblin Counseling Theologian Model. Applicants have been exposed to this model through our course of counseling, Soul Care Training. They have either completed the course of six units over two years, or have completed the introductory units that teach the CTM. They also agree to a commitment of attendance to our weekly Monday Morning Training and to availability to sit in on counseling appointments in order to accrue the 250 hours of observation. Once the 250 hours is reached they are qualified to move into Phase II of internship where they are able to counsel independently up to three clients with supervision. In order to become an established counselor with Plumblin, interns will have completed four years of training. With that being said, let me introduce you!!



**Chris Rodgers** along with internship with Plumblin is currently seeking a degree in Christian Counseling with ORU. Chris is about to graduate from Soul Care Training this month. Chris has impressed me as eager to grow and learn. In answering the question of his vision of his role as a pastoral counselor with Plumblin, Chris had this to say, "It seems to me that if I came to eventually work for Plumblin after completing my training, it would provide me a place where I could enjoy a loving community while fulfilling my desire to help and love people and utilizing the training that I have received academically and spiritually." Chris, at the age of 24, is our youngest intern to date. Chris has also donated extra time to sit at the front desk to provide a friendly face for those entering the doors as well as a voice to those calling in.



**Shelley Mayberry** is a mother of four, a homeschooler, a small business owner and a house church leader. Shelley is currently attending Soul Care Training and has completed the units necessary to ready and qualify her for internship. Shelley declares her confidence that God will show her as she moves forward what her role is as a pastoral counselor but she knows it will "involve looking into the eyes of the afraid and wounded and to minister the love of the Lord Jesus Christ to them." Shelley went on to say that she feels "like the philosophy and team at Plumblin Ministries honors people, honors the Lord and affects a change in lives." On the days that Shelley is here, she has volunteered in significant ways to promote a smooth running office. Shelley is engaging and forthright. We are proud to have her with us.



**Liz Merrill** is picking up where she left off several years ago in her internship. Liz attempted to fulfill the requirements of internship along with maintaining her career but the demands of her job prevented her from giving the time she wished to devote and put the internship on hold with the promise to return! With the support of husband, Brian, the time was right to step away from her career and rejoin the process of internship. We are so excited to have her back. Liz shares that her "spiritual journey has been filled with lots of varied influences and paths. Looking back now it is amazing that I'm here today, but I believe that Christ will be able to use the spiritual journey that I've traveled to help others in unique ways." Liz believes she brings encouragement to those that have and are walking a difficult path through the telling of her own story and God's redemptive work. Between she and husband, Brian, they have six adult children and many grandchildren. Liz has also brought her extensive experience in office management to our office. We are benefiting greatly from her organizational skills. She also recently coordinated with Starworld Theater two theater viewings of *The Shack* and a skyped in interview with Wm. Paul Young, the author of *The Shack*.

# 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?

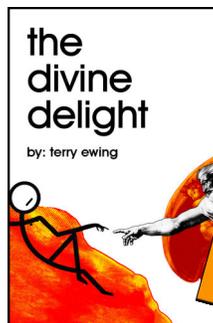
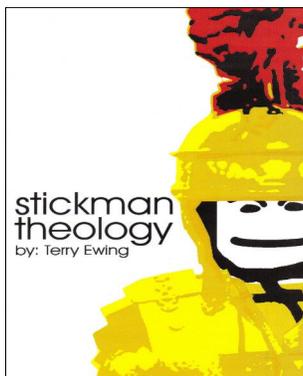
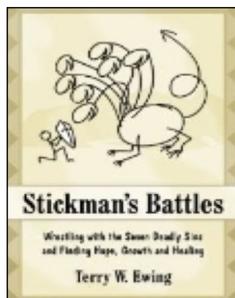
Would you like confidence and freedom to simply enjoy your personal and ministry prayers?

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](https://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!

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