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JOHN

*Inside Terry's Office:
The Gospel of John - What is Life All About ?*

"In him was life, and that life was the light of men." John 1: 4

The gospel begins by proclaiming Jesus as the "Word" (the "logos"). The 'logos' are the teachable words; good for all people, everywhere, and all times. 'Logos' is a contrast to 'rhema' (also translated 'word', or 'teaching'). 'Rhema' is God's word to an individual for a specific time and place. Neither word is primarily about doctrine, but about LIFE!! **Logos both offers life and defines life** (yes, I know that is a vague but high sounding statement, but I do plan on explaining it as best I can).

In order to understand the 'life' Jesus came to offer we have to think in terms of our greatest and highest values; such as Grace, Truth, Mercy, Love, Compassion, etc. All these highest values originated in God and are empowered and employed by God. To grow in our relationship with God is both intimate and generic. Logos is the generic aspects of growing in our relationship with God. Those in relationship with God will grow in their understanding and commitment to the higher values. These higher values generate the most wonderful (fully human) life possible in this world - "Blessed are ...".

The humble, mourning, meek, hungry for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers are the most fully human among us ('blessed'). --- Hang with me, I'm getting to the part that pulls this all together! --- **Therefore**, those who believe in His name / those who value the higher virtues that are manifest in Him are ALIVE. All others, are dead and/or dying.

"The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it." John 1:5

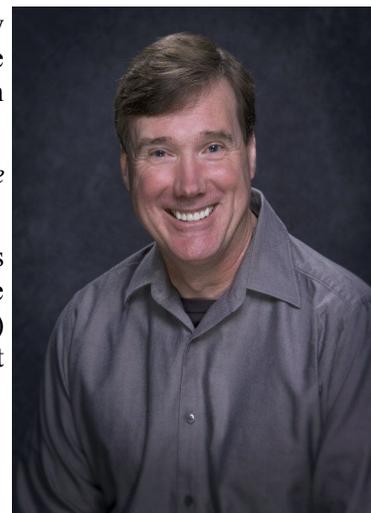
Although this fallen world, our common enemy, and those who don't believe did all within their power to tempt him to sin, Jesus perfectly lived out all the highest values; an actual man who was the fulfillment of all the higher values. No mere man can know and understand all the higher values, let alone fully live them out. And, having lived them out, he is the perfect sacrifice that atones for all our sins so that you and I can move forward with him into the fullness of life that he offers.

What does all this 'theology' have to do with our counseling ministry? In this theology ('study of God') we find hope that we can heal and grow! We are offered a way to move forward into more life. We aren't left to ourselves to find our way out of the messes we create. We can anticipate growing in all the higher values as the Holy Spirit does his sanctifying work within us. In other words, we have reason to believe that seeking the Logos will make us more fully human and alive.

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1: 12

We believe and we are becoming! He makes it possible and empowers Life within us. We are privileged to be vessels of Life and share Life with each other. As we are challenged by darkness (within and without) we can bring the Life given us together and gain new Life as the light shines in the darkness!

In His Grip, TWE



ESTABLISHING A PLUMBLINE IN THE HEART OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The Plumbline

John, Fully Alive

*In the beginning was **the Word**, and **the Word** was with God, and **the Word** was God.*

John 1:1, NIV

*My forty-third love letter completes (for now) the portrait I am painting of My Son, a portrait that makes it clear what it means to be **fully alive** as a human being."*

(66 Love Letters, Dr. Larry Crabb)

Each of the gospel writers write about and introduce us to Jesus through their own unique lens of perspective and experience. Crabb writes, "Now John, the dreamer, the poet, a man to whom I revealed the deepest truth about My Son, a truth that no one without My Spirit's prompting could imagine—I chose this man to present the One who fully revealed what it means to live as I live, who revealed My heart, My nature, My love."

The Word in the Greek is *Logos* and to fully capture it's meaning we cannot be restricted by the limitations of our cultural understanding of *Word*. There is no single word that really captures the complete meaning but what John describes is an intimate knowing of who God is through Jesus. I believe John 10 is a wonderful picture of this kind of *knowing*,

v. 14 *"I am the Good Shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by my own."*

v. 27 *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."*

Crabb references John 1:18 when he

says Jesus came to "make him known." "It means to make visible what could be seen in no other way."

So *I have been thinking* about this intimate *knowing*. I have heard it said intimacy can be thought of as, *in.to.me.see!* It is understandable that most of us see what is on the outside, what is external. Jesus brought us in to the internal world of life with the Father. Jesus made a way for us to enter this internal world and to become ourselves fully known and fully alive!

Dr. Barbara Sorrels recently came to speak to our counselors. Dr. Barbara is the executive director of The Institute for Childhood Education in Tulsa, a professional-development and consulting firm for those who live and work with children. One of her points of contention for childcare givers is that they look at children and say, "what do I need NOT what do you need?" She speaks of the importance of looking beyond the behavior to the internal world of the child.

There is a children's book I am curious to read that is one of a series of books by author, Julia Cook, called *I am Not a Verb*. This is a story of Louis who is always doing something and states that it is hard for him to "sit still, it is hard for him to stay at his desk, and it is hard to be a verb!" The adults in his life are constantly telling him to "sit still" and "focus." In a sense (my take away for the purposes of this article) to ask Louis to contain himself is to keep him from being fully alive. So how can Louis BE and still be known and enjoyed??

As a parent I have to say that I was more in the camp of "what do I need?" parenting. As a grandparent it is somewhat easier to enjoy the idiosyncracies of each of our grandchildren and cross over into the "what do you need?" camp. For our family beach trip last year all the families drove separately but with similar travel arrangements--Driving on the way there in two days but hook-

ing it home in one. On the way to, Brynlee's family made one stop in AR at a rest stop with "a grassy area" for the family to picnic and play. On the way back even with occasional stops it was a long car ride for Brynlee to be constrained in her car seat. At one point still a few hours from home Brynlee had had all she could stand and cried out "ISN'T THERE A GRASSY AREA WHERE WE CAN PLAY???" Brynlee has already shown herself to BE most fully alive when she can move and stretch and play—"Don't Fence Me In" would be a good song for her!

John shows us that Jesus came to give us an unfenced in picture of God--alive in you so that you may have life more abundant! (John 10:10) Let us not be constrained or constrain God. Let yourself be known with full confidence that God is alive in you!

~

Carol Anne



What's Your Name?



In William Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*, the young lovers are faced with the conundrum of their true identity. Do they take on their family names and be forced to hate each other, or do they embrace their own name that allows them to love each other. The tension builds until Romeo asks the famous question "If a rose were called by any other name, would it still smell as sweet?" He was wrestling with the question of what is it that makes up our identity. We (myself especially) still wrestle with this question today.

As we look at the book of John this month, a rather small, seemingly insignificant phrase stands out to me. It is recorded not once or twice, but three times throughout the book. It is found in John 13:23, John 20:2, and John 21:20. It is this phrase "the disciple whom Jesus loved." The apostle John, the writer of this book of the Bible, one of the "inner circle" of Jesus' disciples is writing this about HIMSELF! I've heard it taught that he must have really struggled with pride because after all wasn't it him and his brother that had asked for the two most prominent places in heaven? To be seated on Jesus' right and left sides. Now he is recording the events of Jesus' life and ministry, but doesn't refer to himself by name like he does with all the other disciples. He calls himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Can you believe his audacity? Or is it?

I heard a good friend of mine challenge me with these words today. We all have names with which we call ourselves. We may think that we're talking about our given surnames. But we have other names too. Names like successful, beautiful, valuable, worthy, funny, hard working, and talented. We can also have names like failure, worthless, miserable, lazy, less than, loner, and outcast. Sometimes the reason we cannot hear Jesus calling our name is that He is calling us by a name that we are not used to hearing! He calls us "BELOVED". What if John had heard this call and accepted it as his joyful identity? What if he could just rest in the knowledge that this is what Jesus loved about him specifically? What would happen if we can find that place?

Our joyful identity is built on just that. What is it about you that when God looks at you makes Him say "I just love that about you?" Or like in the movie "The Shack" when "God" says "I'm especially fond of you." One tool that we use to help us is just writing down three things that God is just tickled silly pink about you. You see, it is not enough to say that God loves everyone and I'm a part of everyone so that means He loves me. You have to know why God loves you. What are the good things that He has put inside of you? It is from this place that we can begin to manage our emotional investments, have good boundaries, and come out of codependencies. We learn to listen to the name that He calls us by and not to the names that others call us or that we call ourselves by.

I believe that John truly could hear the name that Jesus was calling him by. That name is "beloved". It is one of the names that Jesus is calling you by-"beloved". How would life look if we stopped calling ourselves by some of the names that we use and start calling ourselves "the one whom Jesus loves"?

Anthony Elliott (The one whom Jesus loves)

A Note From the Editor

May/June 2017

Due to a recent changeover in our computer system last month, we have been delayed in getting our monthly newsletter out. What would have been May's Newsletter is appearing June, and June's newsletter will be appearing along with July's. I anticipate we will be back to our normal mailing schedule with our August newsletter. We have been following Dr. Larry Crabb's **66 Love Letters**, and want to make sure a continuity of order is maintained so you don't miss our Counselors monthly commentaries on this wonderful book!

Thank you for your understanding and your continuing prayers and support of Plumblin!

Claudia

~

A Cure for Loneliness

Do you want deeper friendships?

Do you feel left out?

Here is a secret about all my closest friends.....they need me and they show it and tell me that all the time.

Here's how to do it!

Impose yourself upon people. Assume they want to be your friend. Need things from others and assume they want to help. Make your neighbor run to the mall with you. Borrow the rake instead of Amazon Priming it. Save a seat at church for someone. Swap childcare instead of hiring a sitter. Ask a friend to tag along to the Doctor with you. Tell someone you need a training partner for a race. Ask for advice. We lead independent and lonely lives, and we don't want to bother people so we don't and we wonder why we don't have friends. Pick up pizza and pop by a friend's house tonight. If they are busy....worst case scenario, you have leftovers!

Risk. Need. Bother. It's called community.

Jennie Allen

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?

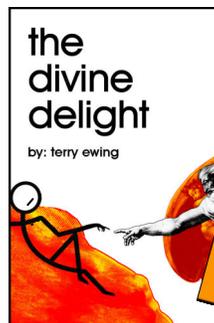
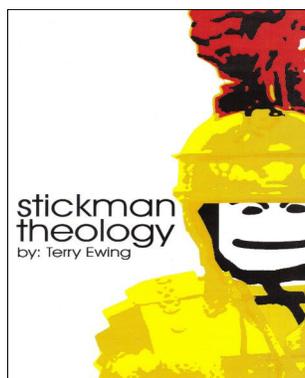
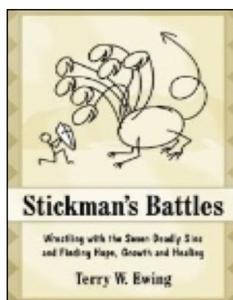
Would you like confidence and freedom to simply enjoy your personal and ministry prayers?

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



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Stickman Theology

On your KINDLE?

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