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I TIMOTHY

Inside Terry's Office:

The Book of I Timothy; Paul's Low View of Women

As much as I would like to explain it away, Paul does seem to have a low view of women.

"A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner." – 2:11-14

"As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list (for financial support). For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busy-bodies, saying things they ought not to." – 4:11-13

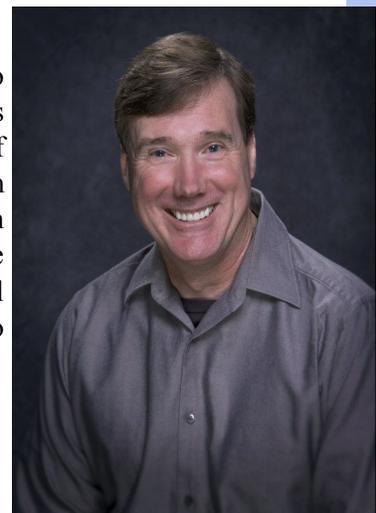
This letter is written to Timothy; not necessarily for the church to read. And, maybe there are some cultural mores that Paul is encouraging Timothy to accommodate instead of challenge. Nevertheless, Paul seems to allow his interpretation of his personal experiences with some woman (women) to bias him. At least he is careful not to claim that God has given any of these instructions, but that they are his own.

In fact, Paul goes so far as to trivialize marriage and parenting by judging those fit for ordination as deacons and elders based upon the appearances of their functioning within their home: "If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?" 3:5 Although I can agree that we shouldn't overlook anyone's obvious dysfunctions within their family, I have never met anyone (including pastors, bishops, and apostles) that live without some dysfunctions in their family.

My take on this whole book is that Paul wrote a letter to his dear son (in Christ) telling Timothy how he wished that we could "all just get along". 'Let's all find our chairs, stay in our chairs, and not wander off the cliff like some others have done! After all, God has given us so much, and revealed truth, and made his sacrifice, and is worthy of our obedience. But, even though Jesus arose from the dead, some can't seem to rise from their bed and do their part! And, we have enough troubles without some women complicating things all the time! And, don't get me started on those trouble-makers out there teaching their legalisms and apostacies!'

Maybe, I interpret this book this way because I'm projecting onto Paul the times I've felt this way. Nevertheless, beyond Paul's prayers for God's blessings upon Timothy and his personal encouragements of him, I would say that Paul was having one very bad, miserable, down-in-the-mouth day. Could it be that God would preserve this letter within the cannon of scripture in order to allow us to recognize that even the Apostle Paul was allowed his prejudices, his hurts, his personal perspectives, and ... his not so inspired-and-inspiring days? I hope so Because I certainly do!

In His Grip, TWE



GUARD THE TRUTH

I am writing all this to you, hoping I can come to you before too long. But in case I am delayed, you will know how one ought to behave as a member of God's family—the assembly of the living God, the pillar and foundation that support the truth—and I think you will agree that the mystery of godliness is great:

He was revealed in the flesh,

Proven right in the Spirit;

He was seen by the heavenly messengers,

preached to outsider nations.

He was believed in the world, taken up to the heavens in glory.

I Timothy 3:14-16 The Voice

From 66 Love Letters: “You are not yet spiritually resurrected into a sinless existence, into a struggle-free life where things always go well, into the full joy you will know when you see My Son. Until then, guard the truth that has the power to keep you turned toward Me, persevering in love and waiting in hope—the truth that makes possible a new way to live as an imperfect person in an imperfect world.”

In the church of Ephesus people were believing strange doctrines and passing rumors. Young Timothy had been given a charge by his mentor, Paul, to confront legalism and immorality with truth and right thinking. (The Voice commentary.) In a mentoring session with an intern who is counseling under supervision we were able to talk about the importance of asking questions. Her counselee had asked a doctrinal question about free will and why if we have free will and

could do whatever we want to do, there was punishment? The intern had replied she didn't know the answer but would talk to some others to get some input. I was able to pass on some sage advice that I have learned over the years. The advice is to ask another question! I would ask why the answer is important. How will an answer add value to one's spiritual understanding? What is the truth being sought? This is called discovery. In discovery we will often find that there has been a twisting of truth that has led to a misperception. My friend and co-laborer at Plumblin, Michelle Elliott, said this to one of her counsees, “The nature of counseling is to challenge your thinking and perceptions.” I think the quote above from 66 Love Letters, “guard the truth that has the power to keep you turned toward me” is a significant statement as we challenge thinking and perceptions.

Danny Silk in his book, *Culture of Honor*, talks about the offensiveness of sin and the offensiveness of breaking the rules. “Many rules call for many judges.” (p. 92) When we live in a rule driven environment (legalism) then we are set up for a twisting of truth. In a rule driven environment, repentance, for instance, does not satisfy the rules. Repentance takes on a different meaning that one is only repentant if they are willing to be punished. When a relationship with the rules is protected over a “heart to heart connection,” the issue of the heart that led to the mistake is never addressed.

I heard a story of a young girl who was caught shoplifting on a church youth trip. The youth pastor confronted her and told her she would not be allowed on another youth trip. She felt ostracized from the church and did not return and continued her path of stealing and bad behavior. Today that young girl as a young woman has a wonderful redemption story but one

wonders if an opportunity was missed to tend to the deeper issue that led to the bad behavior in her teen years.

Danny Silk says, “True repentance is a gift. . . . It is a gift that comes in a relationship. There's no place for repentance in the rules, only for punishment.”

This twisting of the relationship of the rules with repentance leads one away from God, not toward Him.

We are reminded in I Timothy of the price that Jesus paid to allow us to be freed from shame and guilt. Paul says in I Timothy 1:12-14, “But He poured His grace over me, and I was flooded in an abundance of the grace and faith and love that can only be found in Jesus the Anointed.” It is Jesus the Anointed who empowers us (I Timothy 1:12) to live a life that is honorable to others and to God.

Carol Anne



Just tell me what to do...

I imagine that it would come as no surprise if I were to tell you that relationships are HARD! They require a level of involvement and effort that can often feel as though they are draining the very life out of you. Yet, in the next moment, you can be surprised to find the most loving, fulfilling, and meaningful experience awaiting you in that relationship. This idea of being able to “care for each other” can sometime be very elusive. In my own life and in several of the clients I work with, I hear this question being asked often; “If someone would just tell me what to do, then I’d do it. Just don’t know what to do.”

In the book of 1 Timothy, the apostle Paul seems to be granting this wish! Chapter after chapter of “the rules”. This can be very exciting to us, especially in our western culture of wanting to find solutions for every problem. Yet, we must ask the more difficult questions; the deeper questions. Questions like “What is the purpose of the rules?” and “Why are we so drawn to the rules?” If we are not careful, we can elevate the status of the rules to be more important than the relationships. Does this mean we shouldn’t have any rules? Absolutely not! Rules serve a purpose. Their purpose is to hold boundaries, to define expectations, and to help us manage ourselves. The rules help us to see when we have missed the mark. And we have all missed the mark! That’s why we need all need Jesus.

Paul gives us an important reminder in chapter 1:5. Here, he is laying a foundation for the things that he is about to address in the rest of the letter. He says “the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.” The goal of these rules is love! How can rules be loving? Rules can often seem like restrictions, restraints, and oppression. What is the difference? When the goal of rules is not love, they are often used to point out our failures and insufficiencies. They create and foster shame, secrecy, and fear bonds. However, rules made with the goal of love, help us to be the men and women that God created us to be, to live in our joyful identity, and to encourage love bonds.

Many of us can struggle from time to time with the anxiety that can come from being in relationships with people that are difficult to enjoy. Our emotional investment in these people is such that we don’t like how we feel when we are struggling to enjoy them where they are. Often we turn to the rules to try and get that person to straighten up, to be more enjoyable, to stop making me feel bad! This is not using the rules in love. This is using the rules to solve a problem. I love (yet am challenged by) this quote from Esther Perel. She says that often “these things are not problems to be solved, but paradoxes to be managed.” How are you managing your relationship with the rules? Is it for the goal of love, or something else?

Be who you want to be
Anthony Elliott



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 paint, 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).

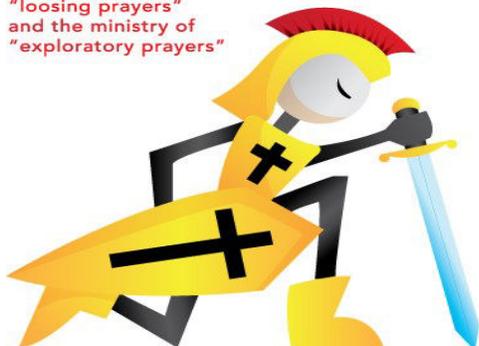
All donations are Tax Deductible.

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?

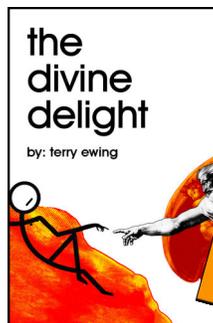
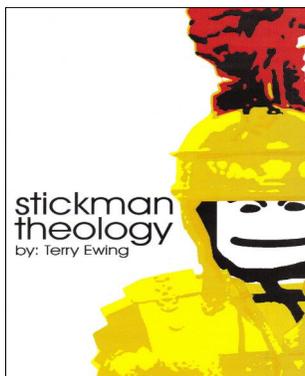
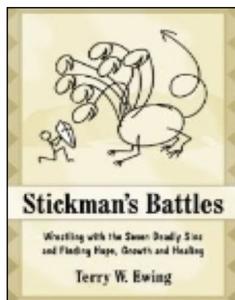
Would you like confidence and freedom to simply enjoy your personal and ministry prayers?

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!

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