

Inside Terry's Office	1
Camz Counsel	2-4
Announcement	5
Fall Classes	6
Book Sales	7

August 2019

Ministering to Our Feelings: Processing Bad

*Inside Terry's Office:
Faithfully Processing Feelings of BAD!*

I guess if I have to explain my pun, then it probably wasn't funny. Nevertheless, ... the title of this article is a pun because feelings of BAD can only be appropriately processed by FAITH. Since faith has **everything** to do with whatever we might be upset with ourselves about. You see, if we are upset with ourselves over things that God doesn't really care about, it takes faith to trust him as our healthiest value setter. Or, if we are not upset with ourselves over things that God does care about, it takes faith to trust His perspective over our own and to allow Him to forgive and sanctify us.

Even in the garden of Eden the temptation was to 'eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil'; in other words, we want to determine for ourselves what is BAD. Or, to put it more gently, we want God to either agree with us or explain to our satisfaction why an action is 'wrong' or 'right'. Although, I believe that God makes a good-faith effort to earn our trust in His perspectives and care of us, He doesn't obligate himself to explaining to our satisfaction or ability to understand. And, finally, it seems that our eternal destination is determined by our willingness to argue with God or trust His judgements (see the parable of the foolish virgins, the sheep and goats, and the rich man and Zachias).

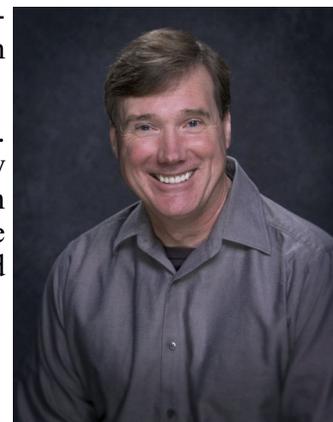
Have you read about the seven seals on the Book of Life lately (unpleasant reading beginning in Rev. 6)? It seems as if God is giving us every opportunity to **judge Him** and demand that He justify all the horrors people will endure before the end. Yet, by faith we proclaim the wisdom, love, justice, and mercy of God; along with all the inhabitants of heaven!

Meanwhile, ... we have the great privilege of coming boldly before His throne; forgiven and justified as if we had never sinned! We humble ourselves before Him and each other. We have nothing to prove and nothing to earn. We simply humbly confess our sin and receive His forgiveness.

And, today, we practice with each other. We may disagree with each other concerning what is and isn't a sin; we can leave that to God to judge. Still, we get hurt by each other and appropriately mad at each other. Hopefully, we **attempt** to offer forgiveness and be reconciled. Since, none of us is God, we may not be able to convince each other of who sinned against whom. If the offence isn't a deal-breaker (abuse, addiction, abandonment, or adultery) we may be able to forgive each other and maintain a relationship without winning the argument as to who is right or wrong. Remember, the covenant statement has always been "The Lord be the witness between me and thee."

Yet, Love is not the avoidance or denial of appropriate anger. Love is found in facing the hurts and angers inherent in any intimate relationship and trying our best to find a way through with each other! In other words, there is no such thing as a love that doesn't confront legitimate MAD. Thankfully, our best friend is an expert at forgiveness and reconciliation!

In His Grip, TWE



ESTABLISHING A PLUMBLINE IN THE HEART OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The Plumbline

CAMZ Counsel

August 2019

“BAD”

I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall.
I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me.
Lamentations 3:19-20 NIV

Affliction: Something that causes pain or suffering.

Bitterness: Anger and disappointment at being treated unfairly; resentment.

Gall: Bold and impudent behavior.

Downcast: Feeling despondent (despondent: in low spirits from loss of hope or courage.)

“Even at our very best—that is, once we are saved and the Spirit dwells within us—we are still at war with ourselves. We are broken and therefore we betray our own convictions. We fail to live up to our own convictions and are disappointed with our own performances. We don’t function the way we want to. . . .When we embrace these expectations, we gain an ability to acknowledge, represent, and begin to process BAD as appropriate emotional response.” (Terry Ewing, *Stickman Theology*, p. 129)

“*Papa* said there’d be days like this! *Papa* said!” God told Jeremiah (Jeremiah wrote Lamentations) when he called him to be a prophet, to speak to the nations, that there would be resistance.

Eventually, they will all give you trouble, but you will be safe. They will fight you, but they will not win. Remember, I am with you. I promise I will always deliver you. (Jeremiah 1:19, *The Voice*)

All of us have character molding decisions every day, and in stress, there is a negative place we are tempted to go. There’s a clever little story I first heard from the Boundaries guys, Cloud and Townsend. It’s an excerpt from Portia Nelson’s book, *There’s a Hole in My Sidewalk*.

Chapter 1

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in
I am lost . . . I am helpless
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

Chapter 2

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place.
But, it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter 3

I walk down the same street
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in . . . it's a habit.
My eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

Chapter 4

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter 5

I walk down another street.

This “autobiography in 5 short chapters” I believe demonstrates *the war with ourselves* that Terry expressed. **Bad** is the negative emotional response to my own sinful behavior. At some point in the stress that “Papa” said would happen, Jeremiah, confronted his own sinful responses. In Jeremiah 3:19, he has had it! He’s stewing in the affliction, he’s suffering and he’s **mad**, *the bitterness and the gall* leads to his despondency and hopelessness. Stress is like that hole in the sidewalk, and it can suck us in.

We didn’t cause the hole in the sidewalk but at some point we must make the choice of how we respond to that hole in the sidewalk. Jeremiah found himself in a deep dark hole in his mind but then he remembered:

Continue Camz Counsel
August 2019

“Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, **‘The Lord is my portion;** therefore I will wait for him.” Lamentations 3:21-24

Remembering that God was with him as he had promised, Jeremiah accepted his own contribution to his attitude of despondency and chose another direction in his mind and “walked down another street”. Modern psychology and counseling have called this *mindfulness*. Mindfulness practices have been developed to reduce symptoms of depression, and to reduce stress and anxiety. But predating all of modern psychology we find that God is the greatest soul-ologist. I mean, really, *he knit me together in my mother’s womb* (Ps. 139:13)! Once we are able to process and acknowledge our own bad (confession), we are renewed through faith that God is our portion and we make a new commitment to head in a different direction!





It has been a little over three years since we lost Steve Merrill. His love, compassion, and humor were a tremendous influence in our lives and for those who knew him, I know we each have a place in our life that reflects him! This year in honor of Steve and how he shaped my life, I'd like to do something significant for a ministry that he loved and was such a vital part. He served on The Board of Directors of Plumblin Ministries, Inc. Plumblin serves the Tulsa community by teaching relational skills, and giving hope to the emotionally hurting through our counseling services. We are a 501c3, and mostly partner with churches to offer pastoral counseling free of charge. To others we offer the same at a very reduced rate. Plumblin's founder Terry Ewing has been a significant friend and influence for our family, including helping us through grief. Terry did Steve's funeral, and married 2 of our children.

Plumblin has just recently opened a second location . If you would like to join me, I'd like to offer matching funds up to \$1,000 for the purpose of raising funds towards the signage for Plumblin's current location as well as our new sight. I believe the total cost will be approximately \$5,000 - \$6,000.

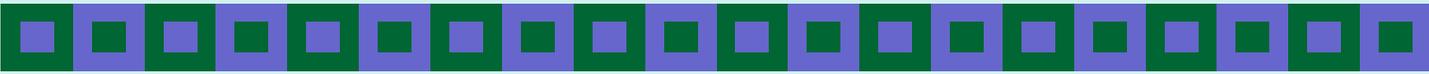
Will you honor the memory of Steve this year by giving a tax deductible donation to Plumblin? If so, please earmark your funds as "given in the memory of Steve Merrill" and I will match your provision.

You may send your check to:

*Plumblin Ministries
8222 East 103rd, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74137*

Thank you for joining me and giving back to this ministry!

*Sincerely,
Sue Merrill, Pastoral Counselor*



2019 FALL CLASSES

Trust Building Recovery Workshop

Saturday August 24, 2019

From 8:30 to 2:30 (Registration at 8:30)

Cost: \$75.00 per person.

Introductory Special: Bring a friend and get 2 for \$100!

Soul Care—Unit IV: Family Dynamics

Starts Thursday, September 5th at 6:30 pm

Cost— go to www.plumblinelineonline.com for various options

CoDependency—When good behaviors are taken too far,
or when I need you to be okay for me to be okay,
you may need the skills taught in the codependency class.

Starts—Sunday, September 15th for 10 weeks—2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Cost \$70.00 plus book

Boundaries—Why do I say yes, when I want to say no?

Do I feel controlled by others? Do I feel a need to control others?

Get help with these questions by learning about BOUNDARIES!

Starts Tuesday September 17th—10 weeks—6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Cost—\$70.00 plus book

Safe People—Learn how to identify the nurturing people

we all need and want in our lives as well as how to be that person for those in our lives!

Starts Wednesday, September 18th—10 weeks 6:30—8:30 pm

Cost—\$70 plus book

Stickman's Prayers

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

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

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?

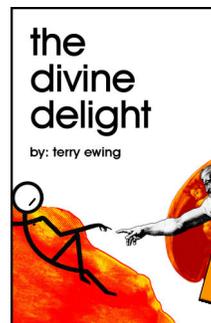
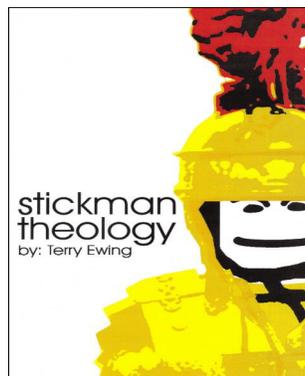
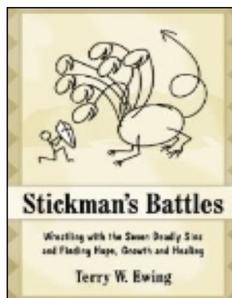
Would you like confidence and freedom to simply enjoy your personal and ministry prayers?

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

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