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# THIRD JOHN

*Inside Terry's Office:*

*The Book of Third John—"A Dispute Among the Brethren?"*



In this third short epistle from John we are given a glimpse into the workings of the early church.

It seems that John's friend, Gaius, had been kind and generous toward Demetrius, another friend of John's. Demetrius was on mission to "the gentiles". In caring for Demetrius, Gaius may have incurred the anger of the malicious and controlling local pastor, Diotrephes. John claims that he will expose Diotrephes next time he visits Gaius' church.

Last month I summarized John, the apostle of love, as saying to one friend, "I'm saving the best of what I want to talk to you about until we are face to face". I would summarize this next epistle as John saying to a different friend, "I'm saving the worst of what I want to talk to you about until I see you face to face."

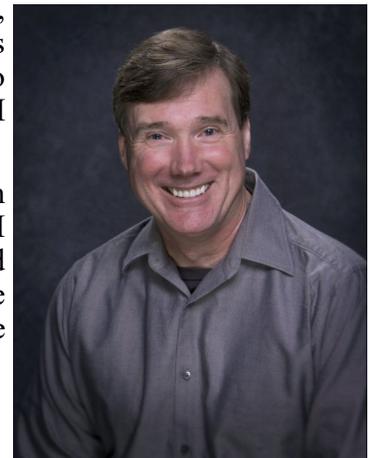
Reading these two epistles back to back makes me feel right at home! It is good to know that even in the early church the most important matters were not solved by letters. The best of our joyful moments and the worst of our conflicts can not be experienced through letters. There are those wonderful and difficult relationship that can only be experienced person to person. The "apostle of love" was committed to embracing both!

When I was MUCH younger I thought that if we could only embrace the Early Church Model, that all the impurities of our current church could be avoided. That seems like a very long time ago for me. I don't even remember what I thought the Early Church Model was anymore. Now I believe that the church is and always has been a place of amazing joys and complicated conflicts. As such, it is no different than my expectations for marriage, parenting, friendships, etc.

Soooooo, this is what I gain from reading the third gospel of John: 'walking in truth' means learning to embrace the highs and lows of relationships. The church is not a safe place to go and avoid the stress of honest relationships. If anything, the church is where it is most important to embrace the stress of our disagreements and offenses; love and truth demand it. Ohhhhhh, how I wish this were not the case and I could run to that romantic and idealistic Early Church Model that I used to believe had been, ... once upon a time. But the Bible is too honest to present us that option. God has always said, "The best I have to say to you will not be from a book but heart to heart. And, the worst I have to say to you will always be face to face."

We are emotional and relational because we are created in the image of an emotional and relational God. As much as I sometimes wish we could all just get our thinking right and therefore live our best lives, God knows us better than that. He relates to us as complicated individuals and equips us to relate to each other that same way!

In His Grip, TWE



# Camz Counsel

March 2019

3 JOHN

## *Jesus, the Point of Everything*

*I was filled with joy and delight when the brothers arrived and informed me of your faithfulness to the truth. They told me how you **live continually in the truth of Christ**. It is the greatest joy of my life to hear that my children are consistently living their lives in the ways of truth! 3 John 3-4 TPT*

Please consider with me these thoughts from Larry Crabb in the sixty-fourth love letter (66 Love Letters), 3 John:

John couldn't bear people thinking of **the incarnate Son** as either less than God or less than man and, therefore, less than **the point of everything**.

No degree of fellowship with [God the father] enjoyed by his most devoted follower is beyond your reach. Between the Father, the Son and the Spirit, nothing good is impossible. **One mark of real fellowship with THEM is the power to love the person in your life whom you feel most justified in judging** and to keep loving others [even if that person changes or not].

Every one of us has that someone in our life who gets on our last nerve, someone whose offenses are too numerous to count, someone who is hard to love. It appears that there may have been such a person in this small community of believers, Diotrephes, John gives only a portion of his attention to this person when he calls him out for his divisiveness. John warns the community to not be imitators (v. 11) by stooping to his level. Don't you feel justified in being snarky when it comes to such a challenging person? It gives us some level of momentary gratification to be able to vent our displeasure and have others agree with our judgment. We fantasize about how much easier life would be if we could just escape this person.

I have a new quote displayed on my message board in my office by Elisabeth Elliot – *The secret of life is Christ in me, not me in a different set of circumstances*. It's been fun for me to travel through these letters of John the past few months and to see how this secret of life is demonstrated. In 1 John we are introduced to *koinonia* as "sharing in partnership" and a "reality shared in common". Because of Christ we share fellowship with the Father and with each other. This is TRUTH. Living and walking in the truth is a theme carried through these 3 letters. And now in this third letter John commends Gaius for his expression of living in the truth through his hospitality in spite of what we learn later is meant with opposition.

Years ago I remember talking to a young married man and father who was feeling falsely scrutinized by his in-laws. We talked about how Christ had also come under that kind of harsh scrutiny. I had him read with me the encouragement from Phil 2:5-8 to have the same attitude as Christ Jesus who did not regard his equality with God a thing to be seized. But instead he took on the form of a servant. He became human. He humbled himself. He became vulnerable. He was obedient. In response the young man lamented that Jesus could do that because he was Christ. It was this gut level response that separated him from the life giving truth of sharing life with Christ in hardships.

*Carol Anne*





ANNOUNCING!

Save the Date!

Our New Plumblin Satellite Location is Opening Soon!

Plumblin Ministries is excited to announce, that we are opening a satellite office in Midtown Tulsa on March 1, 2019!

Our new office will be located at:

**3904 East 31st Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74135**

We are inviting you to *Save The Date* for our *Open House* on *Sunday, May 19th* from 2pm to 4pm, to come and tour our new facility and join us in celebrating all that God is doing at Plumblin Ministries!

Stay tuned on Facebook @Stickman and in April's newsletter for our *Open House Gift Registry!* This registry will provide you with an easy electronic way to donate items or funds that we are needing to help us outfit the new facility and fill in a few holes in our existing facility. If electronic is not your thing, we always have our *Giving Tree* option at our office as well. We appreciate your continued support and are looking forward to trusting God as we move into new areas of Tulsa to reach even more people!



***“I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my [spiritual] children are living [their lives] in the truth.”***

***3 John 1:4 AMP***

Funny that this verse would come to my attention today, for a newsletter article! Recently, in one of our Monday morning training meetings (we meet every Monday morning for continuing education, prayer, and a devotional), we each shared what we like most that brings us the greatest joy in counseling others.

I enjoy a lot of things about meeting with people, but the thing I enjoy the most, is seeing people experience freedom. I'm not talking about behavior. We humans have a tendency to go there, thinking, "What I'm doing, or what he/she/they are doing, I don't like, and how do I stop it, or get them to stop it!" Goodness, if we could all do that, we wouldn't need each other, or a Savior for that matter!

I don't know if I have vocabulary for the kind of freedom I'm talking about, but I'll try! It's almost intangible but at the same time, palpable, like...seeing dark go to light, or something blurry come into focus, or feeling something oppressive lift. It's the "a-ha!" moment when someone realizes, maybe for the first time ever, that the way God sees them and how He feels about them is not the way they see themselves, not the way they think others see them, and not the way the messages they've internalized through the years have convinced them they are.

These are moments when I feel deeply, the holiness and sacredness of the moment. It's almost like I feel God's joy over one of His kids knowing the truth. It feels heavy...weighty...intense...humbling...like I don't know whether I want to, in my imagination, throw my arms around Him and hug Him and never want to let go, or lie on the floor in complete worship of Him. These are moments when I shut my door, after my counselee leaves, and cry. The gratitude I feel in the moment is overwhelming, and I'm thankful that I get to be a part of what God is doing. I get to see transformation happen right in front of me, and that someone who felt hopeless now has hope, that God is real, that He's with us, that He sees us, that He cares, that the deep pain someone was in just one moment before is now transformed into peace and I got to watch it happen, that my own heart is ministered to in the same moment theirs is. These are moments when I say to myself....this is why I do what I do. Moments when I stand in complete awe of who God is and what He does.

What I get to experience seems indescribable. Sometimes I say to God, "You are crazy! You're just crazy!" Translation...."I am so completely stunned, astounded, amazed, thankful, awed, humbled, and speechless at what You just did that I can't even get my mind around it and my strong feelings are all jumbled up in a big mass of...HALLELUJAH!" And then...I get to see the truth walked out, week after week, with those I see every week. Oh how happy that makes my soul!

Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before Him (Hebrews 12:2). I do what I do for the **joy** set before us...those I work with and me. It truly is inexpressible!

***Michelle Elliott***



# 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?

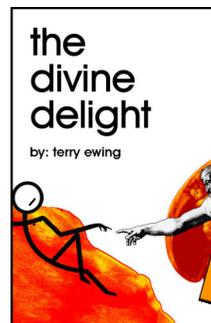
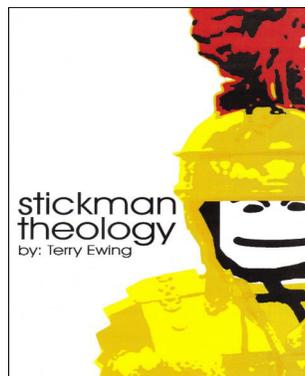
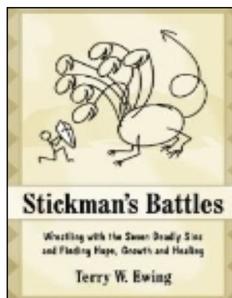
Would you like confidence and freedom to simply enjoy your personal and ministry prayers?

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](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!

# PLUMBLINE

MINISTRIES

8222 E. 103rd St

Suite 127

Tulsa, OK 74133

