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ZECHARIAH

Inside Terry's Office:

The Book of Zechariah - From Which Plumblines Ministries Derived It's Name!

In the book of Zechariah we see God establishing Jerusalem in peace and prosperity; what we all want God to do for us at all times. In this book we see Angels roaming the earth, Satan subdued, nations powerless, and all manner of supernatural encounters; craftsmen (gifted), measuring lines (justice), clean garments (righteousness), lamp stands (established priesthood) and more. ... HOW? How does all this come about? *"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit", says the Lord ... "Who despises the day of small things? Men will rejoice when they see the plumbline in the hands of Zerubbabel."* You see? In the midst of all the most powerful workings of God all that we contribute is SMALL THINGS which "establish a plumbline in the heart of God's people" (our motto).

What are these "small things"? Caring for the poor and not seeking unjust advantages for ourselves. That's it. That's all. Oh, except, of course, you can only do this if you trust God (which may not be easy to do when He doesn't guarantee stability and security by our standards; power and might).

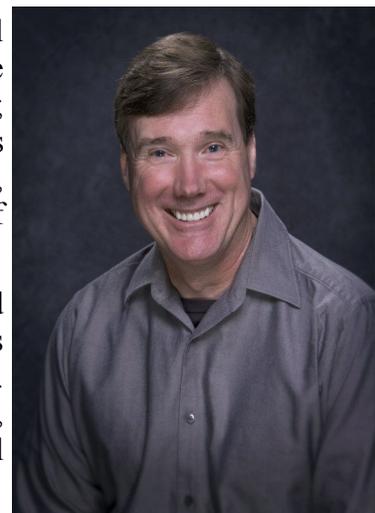
And, remember, the Lord is not offering his promises to any individual, but to the nation as a whole. Therefore, we will be tempted to gain power and might because the other people we share our nation with may not be as committed to the Lord as we are. Don't we need some way to keep them from hurting our chances at being blessed as a nation? The belief of some of the Pharisees was that if everyone in the nation would keep the law of God for just one day, the messiah would come. So, instead of being content with 'small things', they felt the need to gain influence or control over the people. Instead of caring for each other the religious leaders felt victimized by each other because they thought that those who disagreed and differed from them were robbing them of the promises of God.

I believe that God is using the election of our president to point believers back toward 'small things' once again. I didn't have confidence in either of our candidates to exercise the 'power and might' of the office of President in a godly manner. Sooooo, I'm greatly comforted to know that God doesn't count on our proper use of might and power, but upon our embracing His Spirit of compassion and justice in our everyday lives!

We don't have to win power in politics, or in our personal financial security, or in our ability to persuade others that we are RIGHT. Instead, we can focus on what is much more difficult; letting God love us as we are and empower us to love others as they are. Whether or not we seek 'power and might' in politics, finances, or personal relationships, we are 'despising the day of small things'.

I'm writing these things to you to remind myself of what God has called us to ("establishing a plumbline in the hearts of God's people) and to repent of seeking after 'power and might'. Meanwhile, angels are roaming the earth, Satan is being subdued, nations are shown to be powerless, and all manner of supernatural encounters are happening amongst us!

In His Grip, TWE



ZECHARIAH, HOPE

“Now, tell your people what the Eternal, the Commander of heavenly armies, has to say:

“Return to Me so that I may turn back to you.” Zechariah 1:3a

Here is what I have learned about Zechariah: He is both a priest and a prophet, an apocalyptic prophet. The word “*apocalypse*” literally means ‘an unveiling.’” (The Voice commentary on Zechariah) Zechariah calls for the completion of and the restoration of the temple. Crabb in 66 Love Letters likens this to the rebuilding that takes place for us after a loss. Dr. Crabb described a young widow who felt empty and an absence of God’s comforting presence. He said *she’s building a temple*. She’s a building a new life and trying to figure out what it looks like to remain faithful and how she can encourage others in the midst of her loss. She’s not sure what to hope for and what hope feels like. Crabb asks an interesting question, *does hope feel good?* This is how he sees the Lord responding,

“The hope I provide anchors a weary, empty, troubled soul in My plan. Beneath difficult feelings, hope encourages by giving you reason to persevere with the joy of anticipation.” (Love Letter Thirty-Eight: Zechariah)

In the early days of loss the best one can muster is to care through obligation. There is no passion and it is hard to keep going.

As an apocalyptic prophet, God gave Zechariah the ability to see into the future, encouraging the people to see there is a bigger picture, and return to God and trust in His plan for the future. As I was considering this, my mind went to this verse:

“For now, we can only see a dim and blurry picture of things, as when we stare into polished metal. I realize that everything I know is only part of the big picture. But one day, when Jesus arrives, we will see clearly, face-to-face. In that day, I will fully know just as I have been wholly known by God.” 1 Corinthians, 13:12-13, The Voice.

So I have been thinking about this question of *what does hope feel like?* I think we want hope to make us feel happy in the midst of our pain, thinking there is no way that we can ever imagine feeling happy again. This past year I have had clients and friends go through the pain of losing a loved one. They, like the widow above that Crabb described, are trying to figure out how to live without the active presence of their loved one. As weeks go by, there are occasions for levity which are quickly met with guilt for feeling happy at the same time they are mourning. Again that current reality of

momentary happiness is met with a judgment that it is bad. This is what we refer to as healthy mixed emotions. Allowing our healthy mix of emotions, I think, is a key to understanding hope. Hope does not depend on only one emotion of glad. Hope makes it possible for pain and joy to coexist. Hope makes it possible for us to return to God and enjoy His presence when we have suffered a loss. God says, ***return to me so that I may turn back to you.*** A loss helps us to realize how much we need to know God is with us in our temple! Hope helps us to persevere into a future we only see dimly trusting that God will meet us there.

~

Carol Anne



Are You Ready to Get Naked?

One of my favorite Bible verses is located in the book of Zechariah, so I am going to indulge myself to share it with you. It is Zechariah 3, pretty much the entire chapter but specifically verses 3 through 5.

3 “Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel. 4 He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” Again he said to him, “See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.” 5 Then I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the Lord was standing by.

What an incredible picture of our salvation and God’s work in our lives! However, when I read this passage a couple of years ago, something different (and a bit disturbing) stood out to me. What stood out to me was the process of how we get to put on our new, clean, festal robes. In this dialogue, the angel instructs those standing around to “Take off his filthy clothes”. We have to be aware that our clothes are dirty! This sounds very elementary, but I know there are many times that I think that my clothes aren’t “that” dirty. So then, I imagine that there’s Joshua, having his filthy clothes taken off, standing there naked, and the angel now just wants to talk! How humiliating, how embarrassing, how vulnerable! But the truth is this...We cannot put on new clothes unless we first take off the old ones. Oh, sure sometimes we try to put the new clothes on over our old ones, but have you ever seen someone trying to wear two sets of clothes? It looks terrible. Things don’t fit correctly. The old dirty clothes may still smell. It just looks like a mess and is very uncomfortable.

In order for the new clothes to “fit”, we really do have to take off the old ones. So what keeps us from being able to be naked? Just like in the physical world, we face issues of image (what we think we should look like), fear of rejection, ridicule, or judgments, and maybe even breaking family or social norms. There are many more reasons I’m sure, but whatever our reason may be, the consequence is the same. Where there is secrecy, shame will surely follow. And when there is shame, the compulsion will be strengthened. Our clothes will continue to be dirty.

This is another one of life’s paradoxes. The less vulnerable we are, the more bondage and pain we will live in. The more vulnerable we are, the more freedom we will experience. We all long for more freedom, but are we ready to get naked? Finding safe places and some safe friends to be vulnerable with brings a level of connection and sense of being known that doesn’t exist anywhere else. We can experience a joy that makes us want to celebrate. We can then put on our new, clean, festal robes because we are now not just longing for freedom, we are walking in it. So try it this week. Share something, take the risk, see what the new clothes feel like!

Be who you want to be!
Anthony Elliott



“FEELINGS”

Sometimes feelings come along with you on a journey, and sometimes they try to lead the journey. As my Dad says, “feelings have a right to be there.” I have come to learn that “being there” needs a balance. “Truth” is in a balance or sometimes from an absolute framework. “Truth” is in the framework; a point of reference so to speak. For example, God is love and in Him is no darkness. I need to put those glasses on and see what I see. Feelings can be used to tempt you and get you off track. Feelings can also motivate us to let Jesus hold us no matter what the situation is.

It gets complicated when our feelings fuel the accusations that come in the form of questions, like the questions make the accusations true or innocent. What a trap. Wisdom and discernment need to come along with us on the journey. Feelings are always in the ride of life. Sometimes they seem big and find their place in the front seat. Sometimes they seem smaller and ride in the back seat. The space that feelings occupy is neither good or bad as long as wisdom and discernment are allowed to come along too.

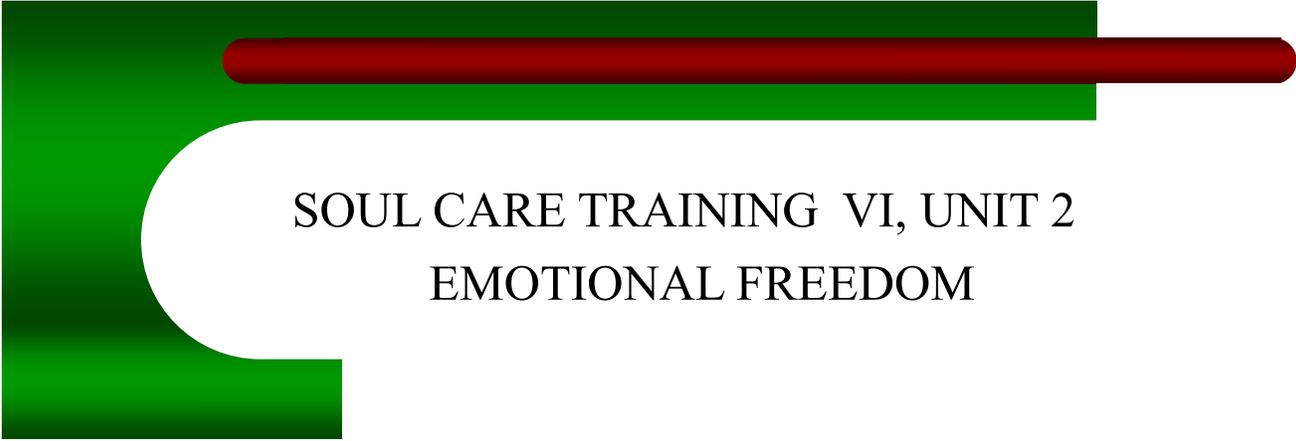
Janice Lynn

For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

It is our prayer that you and your family have a very blessed and peaceful Christmas!

The Plumline Staff



SOUL CARE TRAINING VI, UNIT 2 EMOTIONAL FREEDOM

In this twelve week unit of study we will dedicate ourselves to finding freedom in the expression of emotion, the ownership of emotion, and the freedom that comes from the God-given response to emotionally charged situations. The various topics covered in this course will be:

The Forgiveness Model
Spiritual “Selfishness”
Awareness Wheel
Emotional Awareness
Sexual Relations Triangle
“Step-On-Your-Toe” processing tool
“Walk in the Woods” therapy tool

The required reading for the course will be **Stickman’s Battles by Terry Ewing**, and **Pressure’s Off by Larry Crabb**. They will be read in this order throughout the course and covered in monthly book reviews during a Thursday night session. **Stickman’s Battles** can be purchased at the Plumline office for \$10 and the **Pressure’s Off** may be available at Mardel or Lifeway or online.

The course will be held on Thursday nights 6 :30 to 8:30 p.m. beginning January 12, 2017 through April 6, 2017 (a week will be skipped in March according to Public Schools Spring Break schedule).

A \$50.00 deposit is due by Thursday, December 24th. The \$200.00 balance is due by the first class on Thursday, January 12, 2017.

REGISTRATION FORM
FOR
SOUL CARE TRAINING VI, UNIT II

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK: _____ CELL: _____

EMAIL: _____

DEPOSIT: _____

WINTER CLASSES AT PLUMBLINE

Watch for more details in the coming January Newsletter for these favorite Plumblineline classes!

- Boundaries
- Co-Dependency
- Safe People

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?

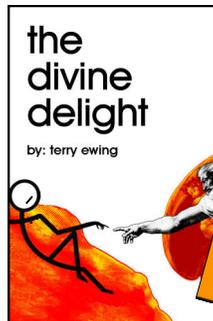
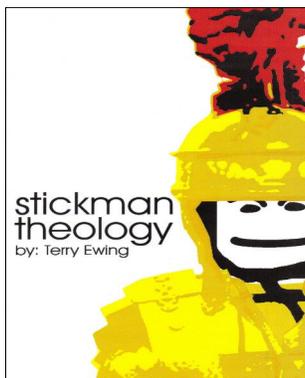
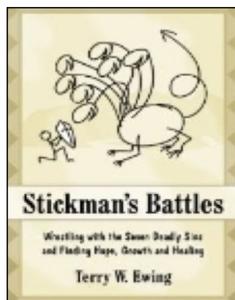
Would you like confidence and freedom to simply enjoy your personal and ministry prayers?

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 Prayer's* 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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