

MBC WOMEN'S STUDY

RELATIONSHIPS: A MESS WORTH MAKING

WINTER/SPRING 2025/26

Class 4: Chapter 6

INTRODUCTION TO THE SEMESTER

- This year is going to be about relationships and how God desires His people to come along side one another for more than just surface level conversations and relationships.
- Specifically, we are going to be talking about biblical relationships and friendships that Christians have with one another.

CONTINUATION FROM LAST MONTH'S CLASS

- Last month we finished chapter 4 so we will continue through chapters 5 and 6.

CHAPTER 5: AGENDAS

- What is an agenda...**from a secular point of view:**
 - An **agenda**, when used in the context of interpersonal relationships, usually implies an **ulterior or secret motive** that a person is trying to achieve, often at the expense of the other person. It suggests a transactional or manipulative dynamic rather than a healthy, mutual one. Examples of having an "agenda" include:
 - Pretending to be a friend to gain a person's trust and then borrow expensive items.
 - Dating someone with the sole intention of getting something specific (e.g., money, status, or physical intimacy) without a genuine interest in a committed relationship.
 - Entering a relationship with unstated expectations or goals that, if known, would cause conflict or disappointment.
- As Tripp says, "...but the point is that what looks good on the surface doesn't always look that way under closer inspection." (41)
- **An agenda, then, is saying or showing one thing but really there is something else which is taking place under the surface.**
- This is something that is common with people and their relationship with the Lord:

- **Isaiah 29:13** “Then the Lord said, ‘Because this people draw near with their words And honor Me with their lip service, But they remove their hearts far from Me, And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote...’”
 - Even though these people of Jerusalem looked holy and righteous. They were saying and doing the right things in front of the onlooking people.
 - What was their agenda? They wanted to simply keep up the appearance of *tradition learned by rote* (routine, memorization, etc.).
 - There was an agenda in the hearts of the Israelites, they wanted the appearance of a relationship with God, but they really wanted to live according to their own appetites.
 - God says in **Isaiah 29:15** “Woe to those who deeply hide their plans from the LORD, And whose deeds are done in a dark place, And they say, ‘Who sees us?’ or ‘Who knows us?’”
 - God knows what takes place both in the deepest caves of our hearts and the darkest corners of the earth.
 - We should seek to live according to what the Lord says, both in our hearts and in our actions.
- There are two themes that Tripp points out which predominate the Scriptures.
- He says they are *utterly unique* concerning our relationships with one another. (41)

The power of self-interest is still present in the believer

- “While the control of sin has been broken, the sin that remains in us still puts up a real fight. This means that while you live on earth, you will not fully escape the power of self-interest in your life.” (41)
- There is no doubt that believers underestimate both the amount of and power of their remaining sin after they have been born again.
- An excellent explanation from Sinclair Ferguson¹:
 - *A much simpler way to think about it is this, that if you’re a Christian, the Lord Jesus Christ dwells in you. And if you’re a Christian, sin continues to dwell in you. And if that’s so, there is what the Westminster Confession calls “an irreconcilable war in your life,” and there will be times when the enemy seems to defeat you. There will be times when indwelling sin seems to rear its ugly head. But the great thing to remember is that the One who is in you, the Lord Jesus Christ, is far greater than any remnants of indwelling sin that remain. Because I think Satan has a very subtle way of saying to us: “Look, there’s sin there and there’s sin there. It isn’t possible*

¹ <https://tabletalkmagazine.com/posts/if-im-united-to-christ-why-do-i-still-sin/#:~:text=And%20if%20you're%20a%20Christian%2C%20sin%20continues,sin%20seems%20to%20rear%20its%20ugly%20head.>

that you've been set free from sin's dominion,"—when the truth of the matter is the very fact that you are concerned about the presence of sin and that you fight against it, that's only possible because you've been released from the dominion of sin and been brought into the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God has a bigger agenda for our relationships that we do

- My opinion is that this theme is either overlooked or unknown to the average Christian today.
- When we think of our relationships with others, the first question we ask ourselves usually pertains to ourselves, not to God. **(think of theme number one...self-interest is still present)**
- We want to know what we can get out of the relationship...we want to know how it is going to better us or make us more complete.
- In other words, "We would easily settle for our own definition of personal happiness when God's purpose is nothing short of conforming us to the image of Christ!" (41)
 - **Romans 8:29** "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren..."
- All that God has for us as His children is intended to conform us more and more into the image of His Son Jesus. This includes relationships; both the hard and good ones.
- Our goal / hope should be to align our agenda in our relationships with what the Lord has already put in His Word for us.

A Road Map to a Bigger Agenda (42)

- Tripp takes us on a journey through Ephesians 4 and maps out God's agenda for us.
- He starts by asking some hard questions: (42)
 - Why do we get angry? Why are we impatient? Why do we fail to be kind and gentle? Why do we hold a grudge or act out of vengeance? Why do we refuse to cooperate? Why do we say things to one another that should never be uttered? Why do we walk away in disgust? Why would we lie to someone or seek to manipulate? Why are we competitive and envious? Why do we struggle to rejoice at another's blessing?
 - We do all of these things for one reason: We want our own way, in the way we have chosen, and at the time we have deemed best. We love us and we have a wonderful plan for our lives! We have a dream.

- Each of us can (and do) easily fall into these areas of sin.
- There are times when it is a habit to feel or think or even act in a certain way. Even if that is the case, we must recognize what the Bible says about this, realize that what we are doing does not align with the Scriptures, and then make the necessary changes. This is done for our good and God's glory!

A Call To Unity (43)

- In Ephesians 4:1-6, Tripp succinctly puts this into one sentence, "You are a recipient of grace and your life should reflect that!" (43)
- This is true, not just for your salvation, but for your entire life...to include your relationships.
- As Tripp goes on to write, "You can't take the gospel seriously and not take your relationships seriously."

MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

- "Paul says that our relationships with other Christians are not something we should take for granted. He says that we are to maintain—not create—these relationships. If you are a Christian, you automatically are in relationship with other Christians." (43)
- We already have what we need in us to have relationships with anyone else who is a believer.
- This is also why Tripp goes on to point out, "Therefore, these relationships are gifts to be managed with great care. If I hinder my relationships with other believers in any way, I am devaluing these relationships."
- This is why we must do all that we can to maintain peace and unity in our relationships.
- This is not going to be easy at times. Sometimes, our relationships are going to fail; even when we have put all we can into them to succeed.
 - It always takes both parties to desire to reconcile...when one party decides that they are not going to move forward unity will be broken.²

MAKE EVERY EFFORT (44)

- "Paul is not naïve about the hard work relationships require."
- If we remember that the hard work is both fueled and rewarded by God, we will desire to put in the work that is necessary to maintain the relationship.

² I think it's important to point out that not wanting to move forward can look different in different relationships. For example, one party may choose simply walk away; not desiring to even have a conversation. Another example is one party will only meet if certain conditions are met or if they are in charge of the meeting. This would be an example of sinful control, not grace-filled forgiveness. It is important to remember that even if someone *says* they want to meet and reconcile, their hearts may still be filled with a sinful agenda. Sometimes all one can do is walk away in love and leave it up to the Lord.

- When making every effort, it is important to think about the physical and spiritual ramifications of continuing a relationship with someone who may be using or abusing you.
- It is not up to you to *stick it out* if you are in danger or a harmful environment.
- Too many people feel guilty for *giving up* on someone when that someone was abusive or never really had the desire or intentions to change for the Lord.

BE HUMBLE, GENTLE, PATIENT, AND FORBEARING IN LOVE

- These are all “character qualities before they are actions toward others.”
- “Humility enables us to see our own sin before we focus on the sin and weaknesses of another.”
- “A gentle person is not weak, but someone who uses his strength to empower others.”
- “A patient person is someone who places the needs of others higher than, or at the same level as, his own.”
- “A forbearing person is someone who does all this even when provoked.”
- This list may seem unreachable or even impossible for anyone.
- This is why we need to have grace in our relationships with others. Without grace, there is no way that we are ever going to be able to attain such a high calling.
- When we walk in the Spirit, we can do this. When we abide in the vine, Jesus will empower us to live in this way and not just have these character traits but exhibit them on a daily basis.
- As was just quoted from Tripp...*even when provoked*. If you are walking in the Spirit, filled with the Word of God, *even when provoked*, you are not going to be shaken under the weight of a friend coming against you.

THERE IS ONE SPIRIT, ONE LORD, AND ONE FATHER (45)

- “Paul grounds our unity in the unity of the Trinity, not in our ability to get along. We get along because Father, Son, and Spirit have allowed us to do so. We can give grace because we have been given grace.”
- It is when we take our eyes from the Lord and put them on the idols of our life that we begin to feel the weight of our relationships.
- It is this grace that God has given us that we need to keep going and fighting the good fight.

7 Tendencies of the Sinful Heart (48-50)

- Tripp calls these 7 tendencies “that are damaging to relationships, disruptive of God’s purpose, and require persistent battling.”
- This is a self-evaluation for our own hearts:

- The tendency toward self-indulgence (vv.19-24). My behavior in the relationship is driven by what I want, not God's purpose.
- The tendency toward deceit (v. 25). I will manipulate the truth to get what I want out of the relationship.
- The tendency toward anger (vv. 26-27). I want to control the relationship by venting my anger or by holding it over you to control you.
- The tendency toward selfishness (v. 28). I want to protect what I have, rather than offer it to serve you.
- The tendency toward unhelpful communication (vv. 29-30). Rather than use my speech to make you feel better and put you in a better position, I speak to make myself feel better and ensure that I am in the top spot.
- The tendency toward division (v. 31). I give in to the temptation to view you as an adversary, rather than a companion in the struggle of relationship.
- The tendency toward an unforgiving spirit (v. 32). I want to make others pay for their wrongs against me.
- Everyone is tempted towards and falls into these at one time or another in their various relationships with one another.
- It is when we come to the conclusion that relationships are hard work, but God gives the energy and wisdom to excel in them.
- “We become willing to enter the struggle rather than avoid it, because we start to see that this is where God is present and active. We begin to run toward others rather than away from them, and we begin to experience the following: (49)
 - How much wiser God's plan is for us than our plan for ourselves (vv. 19—24)
 - The life-changing power of truthfulness (v. 25)
 - The healing benefit of gentleness, patience, and love (vv. 26—27)
 - The joy of serving the needs of someone else (v. 28)
 - The value of loving and wholesome communication (vv. 29—30)
 - The beauty of functional unity in a relationship (v. 31)
 - The freedom of practicing forgiveness (v. 32)”
- **Tripp goes on to write, “According to Ephesians 4, it is that the highest joys of relationship grow in the soil of the deepest struggles.”**
- It is through these struggles that we have the opportunity to see God's amazing grace and experience His joy in our life.

- It is not just for us to experience God’s grace, but for us to experience real gospel growth.
- Our character is formed through the crucible of life; especially how we handle the relationships that God has placed us in.
- If we understand that all the Lord brings our is for our good and His glory, then even the worst relationships we have will bring us joy because God knows it is good for us.

CHAPTER 6: WORSHIP

- This chapter is all about where we find our identity and where we place our worship.
 - His main thesis for this chapter is:
 - “Good relationships are always built on the foundation stores of *identity* and *worship*.” (53)
 - What are your initial thoughts about this propositional statement? Have you thought about your relationships with how you view yourself (as in how you identify yourself) and how you view God (as in your worship of Him and not the other person) in mind?
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Everybody’s Struggle, Everybody’s Story (52-53)

- “Struggle in relationships is everyone’s story. None of us has ever had a relationship completely free of struggle. All of us have had moments when we were discouraged by the effort a good relationship requires.”
- As has been said throughout the book so far, it should never come as a surprise when we struggle in our relationships with anyone.
 - Most common is the realization that marriages take work, much more work than most people think.
 - Any good marriage is going to have substantial work put into it. That work, as Tipp points out through this book and especially this chapter, is primarily done in our own hearts.
- “All of us have allowed inconsequential actions and habits to get under our skin and argued for a personal preference as if it were a moral absolute. And each of us has tried to be the Holy Spirit in another person’s life, trying to work spiritual changes that only God can accomplish.”
- I can only imagine the hours and hours of counseling and discipleship that Tipp has been through with frustrated people who want to be the Holy Spirit in their spouse’s life.
 - This is the hardest place for many people (most of the time in my experience it is the wife) to sit. They can see what the issues are, they can articulate them in an understandable way, but they must then wait for the Holy Spirit to do the work.

- Our frustration can be exasperated when we forget the work that the Lord has had to do in our own hearts. We can often times think that we have gotten everything on the “first try” and never had to work through struggles.
- When we forget “who we are”, we quickly forget about the grace that we needed for our own change.
- It is a good desire to have a good relationship. But as Tripp points out, “It is written out of the understanding that good relationships just don’t drop out of the sky. Good relationships are built on a solid foundation. Without this foundation, no amount of hard work will make your relationships what God intended them to be.”
- So, here’s a question to ask ourselves that will help us to further our relationships:
 - Do we know that good relationships require God’s work and by usurping His role in the relationship there will be no traction to move forward?

THE TWO FOUNDATION STONES (53-54)

- “Good relationships are always built on the foundation stones of *identity* and *worship*. Even though these ideas may seem distant from our daily struggles, nothing can shelter our relationships from difficulty if we aren’t building community on this foundation. We often mistakenly think that our relationships are difficult because, like a child learning to walk, we simply lack the skills and experience not to fall. This may be true in part, but the greater problem is the foundation we are walking on. For our relationships to be what God designed them to be, the rebuilding, restoring, and reconciling must start with a solid new foundation.”
- This becomes clear as he moves on, but to bring out the point that he is making, the world **only** looks to the behavior as the problem.
- The church and world will do all they can to make sure that their own hearts are not the target and only desire to change themselves or the person from the outside.
- While it is true, as Tripp says, that one may need some skills to better communicate or understand, having better skills will do nothing for the heart.
- For example, we can strive not to be angry when we talk, but if it is still in our hearts and minds, there is only a matter of time before those angry words come out in full force.
 - The Christian is not called to *cope with* or just try to *manage* their sin...they are called to kill to it.
 - When we allow sin to have a place in our hearts and minds, we are not destroying it and allowing Christ to live in that area.
 - What happens is when that area that we love so dearly is “touched” by someone else, our foundation is exposed and our true hearts are apparent.

- “This foundation is not what we do and say. It begins in the heart, the source of the thoughts and motives that shape what we do and say. Your heart is always with you, and in profound ways it shapes your interactions with others. If our heart’s foundation is solid, based on God’s truth, design, and purpose for us, we will be able to build healthy, God-honoring relationships even though we are flawed people living in a broken world. By contrast, broken community is always the result of broken foundations.”
- Since our *heart is always* with us, that is our aim. The focus is to our heart to make sure that we are guarding it from sin coming in and cultivating it so that sin will not find a place when tempted.
- “The two stones in this foundation are identity and worship. When we talk about identity, we are not referring to your name, birth date, and Social Security number. We are talking about how you define yourself—what talents, qualities, experiences, achievements, goals, beliefs, relationships, and dreams you use to say, ‘This is who I am.’ Similarly, when we talk about worship, we do not simply mean the order of service at your church on Sunday morning. What we are getting at is that, because you are a human being, there is always something you are living for; always some desire, goal, treasure, purpose, value, or craving that controls your heart. The Bible reminds us that God wants—and deserves—to be the defining center of both these things. **When I live out of a biblical sense of who I am (identity) and rest in who God is (worship), I will be able to build a healthy relationship with you.** These are not abstract theological concepts. We’re talking about the content and character of our hearts. These foundational issues of identity and worship are an inescapable part of your nature as a human being. **What you believe and do about these two things will shape the way you live with the people God has placed in your life. For this reason we can say that we all live theologically; that is, the things we believe about God and ourselves are the foundation for all the decisions we make, all the actions we take, and all the words we speak. The theology you live out is much more important to your daily life than the theology you claim to believe.”**
- This long quote from page 54 is well worth the read over and over again.
- These are the two main issues that cover the NT, especially the Epistles. Who we are now as a Christian and Who we are to worship.
- When we know who we are in Christ, when we know what we have in Christ, when we know that no matter what we are secure in Christ, we are going to live without fear as we rest in the work of Christ.
- I think the final sentence is the most telling...how we live is far more important than what you claim to believe about God.
- In our modern-day language, we would call someone a hypocrite or two-faced.
- They say they love God but then treat others with contempt when they do not get what they want or when others treat them in ways they don’t think they deserve.

- A good question to ask...do you live what you believe?
 - Let's be honest, there is always going to be a disconnect between our beliefs and our practice. There are always going to be ways that we fall short when striving to live for the glory of God.
 - Perhaps a good follow-up question is...when confronted by others or the Word of God regarding areas that you fall short, how is your response?
 - Do you see others as simply obstacles to getting what you want or people that the Lord has sovereignly placed in and around your life to help conform you more into the image of Christ?

Let's look at the two areas that Tripp calls the foundation stones for our relationship.

Remembering Who You Are (54-57)

- "It's impossible for identity not to be an issue for human beings. God has made us rational creatures who make choices based on the way we interpret life."
- The obvious question that arises from this statement is what are we using to interpret life. What lens do we have on when we look at others and all that is taking place around us?
- As he further states, "The identity I assign myself will always affect the way I respond to you."
- How we view ourselves is directly related to how we respond when someone talks to us or treats us in a way that we don't think we deserve.
- For example: If we think that we are the smartest person in the room...when someone challenges us and what we think, there is going to be trouble and most likely a conflict.
- The more elevated view that we have of ourselves, the more and more offended we are going to be when others *seemingly* contradict what we say.
- **This is from research on self-esteem in our modern-day culture from a wide variety of sources:**
 - We live in a culture that heavily emphasizes self-esteem, often linking it to success and happiness, but this has created a paradoxical situation: while promoting positive self-regard, it sometimes fuels narcissism, ignores systemic issues (in "confidence culture"), and researchers debate its actual effectiveness, with some finding strong self-esteem can correlate with negative traits, and that success often *builds* self-esteem rather than the other way around, leading to calls for more self-compassion instead.
 - Many experts now advocate for **self-compassion**, which involves treating yourself with kindness and recognizing shared humanity (that suffering is universal) rather than self-pity or inflated self-esteem, notes Self-Compassion.

- This approach fosters resilience and mental well-being without the pitfalls of pure self-esteem, says Psychology Today.
- For the past several decades, psychologists have told us that we need to think about ourselves more and be more positive about ourselves.
 - Recently I saw a commercial where adults were telling kids in a variety of settings and signing a song that they were all special.
 - By the very definition of special, if they all are...then none of them are.
- We have created a culture (and yes, especially inside the church) that thinks they are the center of their own universe and anything or anyone who goes against them is going to pay the price.
- We must remember, when dealing with identity, it is a core issue in people. When you encounter someone who finds their identity in anything outside of Christ (especially when it's found in sinful behavior), there is going to be a war that takes place.
 - When you confront someone about their identity, you are telling them that the very foundation they believe to be true is wrong...and this could go back decades.
- When someone identifies as a victim, that is how they see themselves and everyone is out to get them.
 - This is displayed as someone who thinks they are powerless, they blame others, take no responsibility for their own actions, lack empathy for others, do not want solutions only acceptance of their situation, etc.
- When we act like this or encounter someone like this, Christ is the answer. When we forget who we are, we act like independent creatures who do not need God. (55)
- “Paul and Silas sang hymns in the Philippian jail. You can only do that if you have remembered that your welfare and freedom are in the hands of an all-powerful God who is your Father. Much of the drama of God's people is a drama of identity.”
- Paul and Silas knew they were God's children. They knew that God was taking care of them. They knew that no matter what the prison system did to them God was in control.
 - When this is our mentality, we can, like them, sing praises to the Lord.
- There are only two options that Tripp points out, “Either I get my identity vertically, out of my sense of who God is and worship who he has made me in Christ, or I will seek to get my identity horizontally, out of my circumstances, relationships, and successes.”
- When we seek our identity outside of Christ, it is going to constantly change with what others think about us, with what we think about us, with what the world thinks is best, and the list goes on and on.
- When we look to Christ to tell us who we are and where we stand in His overall economy, we are going to find stability, peace, joy, and a sense of purpose.

- **Hebrews 10:19-25** “Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”
- Can you see all the identity language in these verses? Write out as many as you can.

- This was just one of his references in the book and just a drop in the bucket of all the NT says about us being now in Christ.
- As Tripp points out regarding the importance of knowing what we have in Christ, “3.) Much of the disappointment and heartache we experience is the result of our attempts to get something from relationships that we already have in Christ. In almost thirty years of counseling, I have talked with countless women in difficult marriages who said, “All I ever wanted was for my husband to make me happy.” My first thought is invariably, Well, then, he’s cooked!”
 - Your husband or best-friend cannot (not just won’t but actually can’t) give you what you already have in Christ or what you have available to you in Christ.
 - When you search for what you need from Christ in someone else, you both are going to be very disappointed and discouraged.
- As he says, “No human being was ever meant to be the source of personal joy and contentment for someone else.”
- You can’t find your Messiah by looking in this world or to other people. You must look to Christ.
- When we do this, he says, “I will be angry not because you are a sinner, but because you have failed to deliver the one thing I seek from you: identity.”
- We will all have this war within us until the Lord calls us home.
- We are never going to have a perfect relationship, but that should not stop us from living with others in relationships. When the goal is Christlikeness and not perfection, it makes even the hard times worth going through because we know there is a purpose.

- When we know that Christ is not just using the other person for me but also me for the other person, we can persevere because we love Christ and desire to see ourselves and others more like Him.

Remembering Who God Is (58-62)

- “Worship is first an identity before it becomes an activity. That is, you and I are worshipers, which is why we worship. Our hearts are always under the control of something, and whatever controls your heart will control your behavior.”
- **Matthew 6:19-24** “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”
- We all live for something...what Jesus calls a treasure.
- That treasure is what will *always* control our hearts.
- Tripp points out, “Finally, Christ says that what controls our hearts controls our behavior (v. 24). If something is valuable to us, we will seek to get it through the situations and relationships of daily life.”
- In other words, we are going to work for what we hold dearest to us.
 - We will *always* find and have time and energy for what we desire the most.
 - We can say one thing but our actions will *always* tell us the true story.
- As Tripp points out, “This has many implications for relationships, because only when I am worshipping God for how he is am I able to love you as you are.”
- He makes this connection in three ways:

TO LOVE YOU AS I SHOULD, I MUST WORSHIP GOD AS CREATOR (58-60)

- After paraphrasing Psalm 139, Tripp makes the statement, “If I do not see the wise work of the Creator when I look at you, it will affect the way I relate to you.”
- God created that person and they are His image bearer.
- If we are dissatisfied with how God has created someone, we may have a desire to *recreate* them into our own image or into an image that we think is better.
- He points out, “If I am ever going to value who you are and benefit from our differences, I must look at you and see the wisdom of the Creator.”
- We should not strive for conformity but unity.

- Not unity around our likenesses but around Christ. We can celebrate the ways that He has made us different knowing that it is by those differences that we are united as one body under Him.

IF I AM GOING TO LOVE YOU AS I SHOULD, I MUST WORSHIP GOD AS SOVEREIGN (60-61)

- All of our stories are different. They all have different beginnings, middles, and most likely the same ending.
- “When I look at you, I need to see God’s sovereign hand writing your story perfectly. The person you are and the responses you make to life have been shaped by his sovereign choices and your responses to the story he has written for you. He determined that you would be part of the customs and culture of a certain ethnic group. He planned that you would be shaped by living in a certain geographical setting.”
- When we put our way of doing anything as better than someone else’s way without knowing them, we are in danger of living independently and outside of God’s given community for us.
- God knows what we need to be complete, we all have blind spots. If we continually view our own ways as superior, then we are going to miss out on what God is trying to do in our own hearts.
- When frustration and/or anger rises in our hearts because someone is not acting or thinking how we believe to be best, we need to ask ourselves if we know that person’s *actual* life story.
 - Do we know what their childhood was like? What is their marriage and current family like? Are we aware of traumas they have been through, either real or imagined in their minds?
- To simply believe that your better because of your culture or upbringing is not only prideful but also takes God’s sovereign hand out of the relationship all together.

TO LOVE YOU AS I SHOULD, I MUST WORSHIP GOD AS SAVIOR (61-62)

- “Worshiping God as Savior means that I acknowledge that I am a sinner in relationship with other sinners. I remember that you are still in the middle of God’s work of redemption—as am I. He is still convicting you, teaching you, and changing your heart. He is faithfully doing all these things at the best time and in the best way possible. None of us ever gets to be in relationship with a finished person.”
- This is all about perspective and knowing what is true. If we forget this truth, Tripp makes clear that we are going to end up, “self-righteous, impatient, critical, and judgmental.”
- He goes on to say, “When I fail to worship God as Savior, I am too casual about my sin and too focused on yours.”
- He ends with a profound question that may be at the root of much or all our relationship issues... “*Are you trying to do work in someone’s life that only the Savior can do?*”