

# God's Love in Marriage

*We love because he first loved us.*

~ 1 John 4.19 ~

# Intimate Friendship

## God's Love in Marriage

**Overview:** Whether single, dating, engaged or married, we all need an awareness of God's love in order for our relationships to overcome the devastating effects of sin. Only when our hearts are fully aware of God's love are we equipped to love and extend the grace that we all need and long for. In Christ, we're fully known and yet fully loved. This is how God relates to us, and how we can and should relate to our loved ones, especially in marriage. All are welcome to join as we explore the love of God that brings deep and lasting change.

**Teacher:** Greg Fox

**Week 1:** God's Purpose for Marriage

**Week 2:** Cancer and the Cure

**Week 3:** God's Love in Marriage

**Week 4:** Thorns in Marriage

**Week 5:** Friendship and Intimacy

**Week 6:** Deep Lasting Change

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# God's Love in Marriage

Week 1

God's Purpose  
for Marriage

Week 2

Cancer and  
the Cure

Week 3

God's Love  
in Marriage

Week 4

The Thorns  
in Marriage

Week 5

Friendship  
and Intimacy

Week 6

Deep Lasting  
Change

# Intimate Friendship

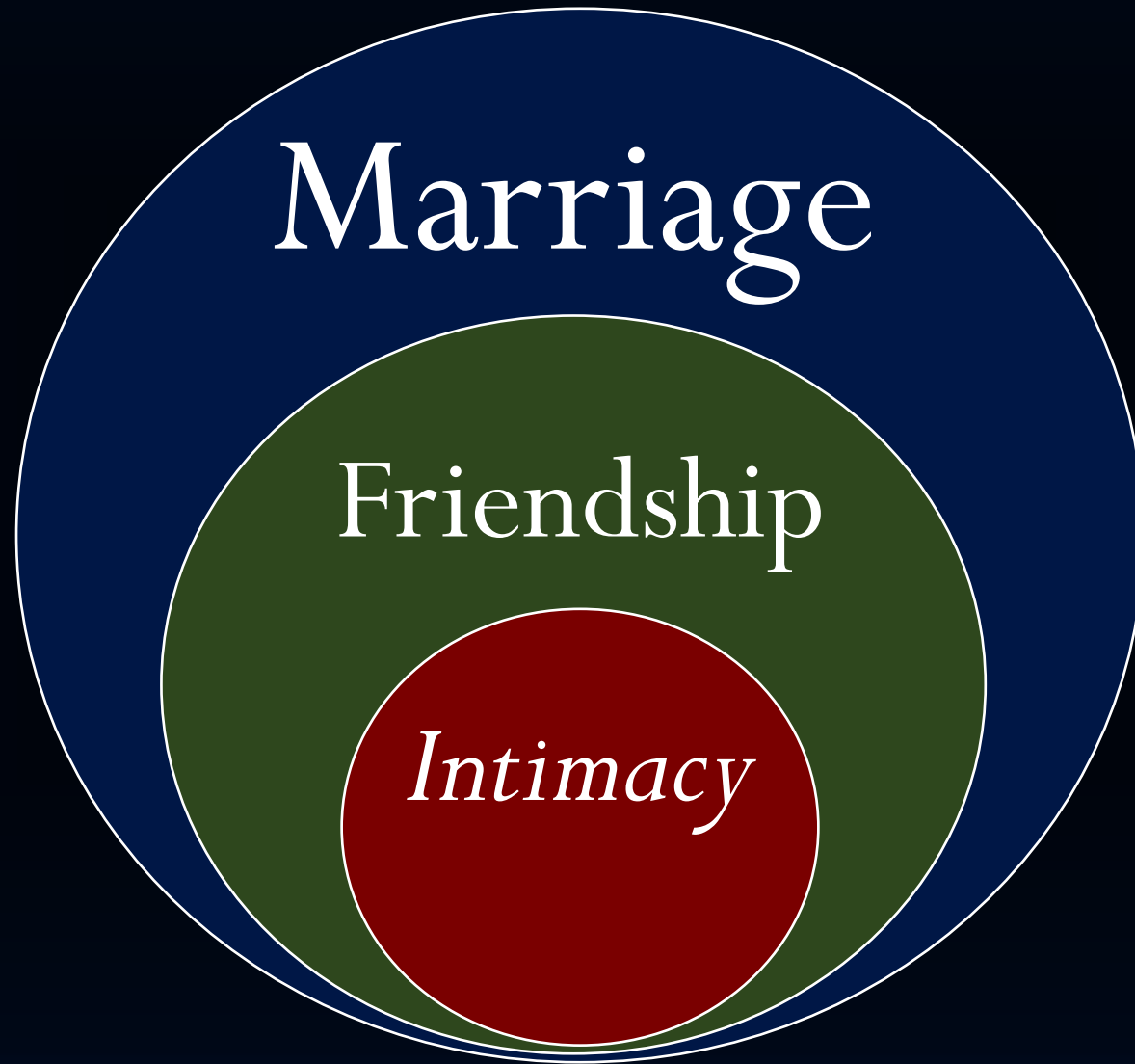


Marriage

Friendship

Intimacy

# Intimate Friendship



## Intimate Friendship

You will have a difficult time  
being a friend to your spouse  
if you don't understand  
your friendship with God.

## Intimate Friendship

Being a friend of God  
is His idea.

Intimate Friendship

John 15.15

but I have called you friends,  
for all that I have heard from my Father  
I have made known to you.



## Intimate Friendship

Jesus defines friendship as  
pointing each other to the Father...  
and reminding each other  
to abide in His Love.

Intimate Friendship

Your spouse is not  
your enemy.

You are.

Intimate Friendship

How to be intimate friends

~ and ~

How to be friendly intimates

12 suggestions

## Intimate Friendship

Great intimacy is always derived  
from great friendship.

## Intimate Friendship

The most important aspect of  
intimate friendship is:

COMMUNICATION

that is both **gentle** and **intentional**.

*(to each other about each other)*

*Week 6*

# Deep Lasting Change

*And we all... beholding the glory of the Lord,  
are being transformed*

~ 2 Corinthians 3.18 ~

## Deep Lasting Change

I want to be a better husband.

I want to be a better wife.

We want to be better parents.

We want to be better friends.

Deep Lasting Change

How?



## Deep Lasting Change

### Question 1:

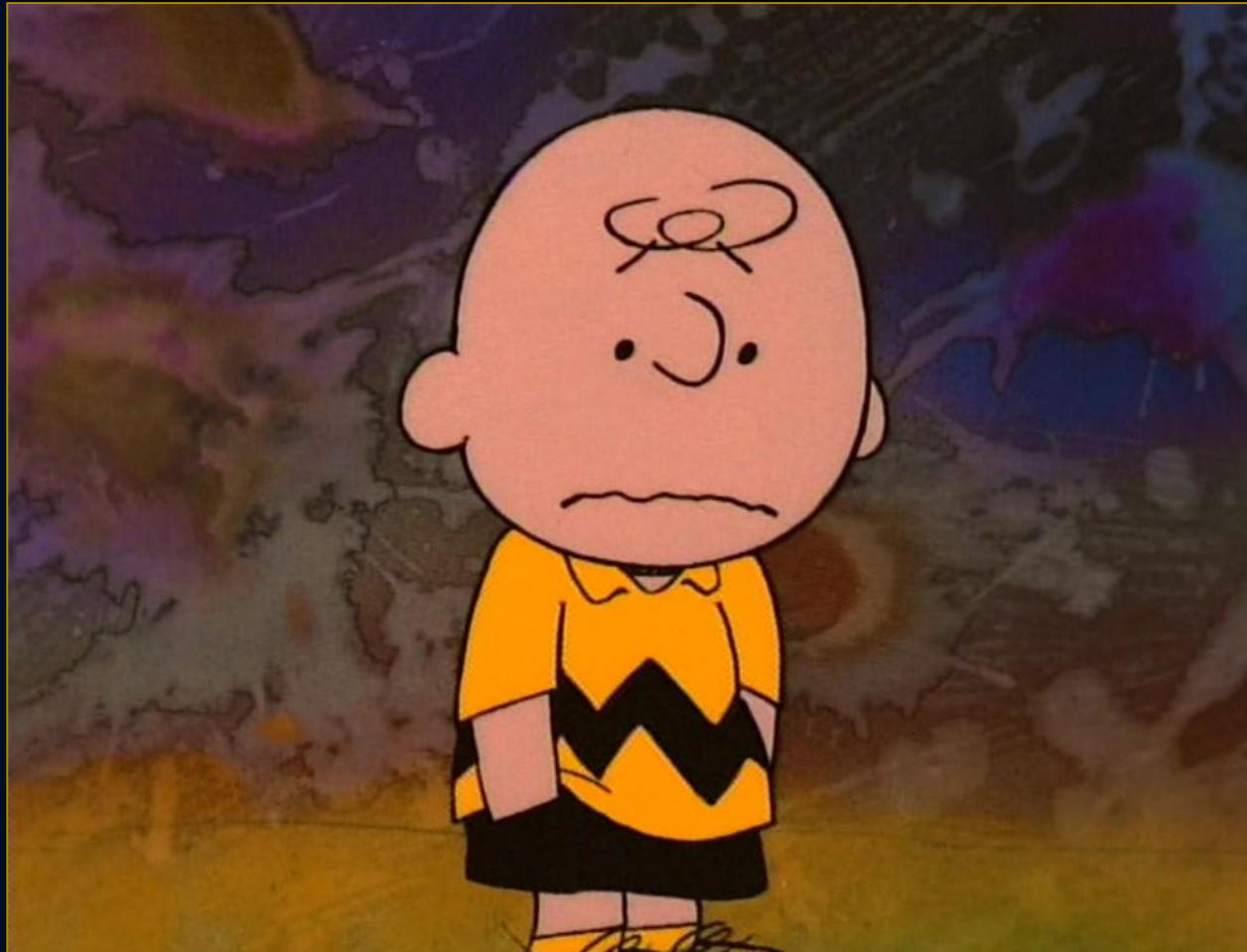
Why can't I seem to change  
what clearly needs to change.

## Deep Lasting Change

### Question 2:

How do we keep change from being merely superficial and temporary?

## Deep Lasting Change



### Charles Shultz:

"You could see the bitterness in him," a friend recalled.

"Nothing in all of his 77 years had been resolved.

He seemed angry at God, angry with friends, angry with fate."

## Deep Lasting Change



Biologist:

The problem is:

*Chemical*

The solution is:

*Medication*

# Deep Lasting Change



Moralist:

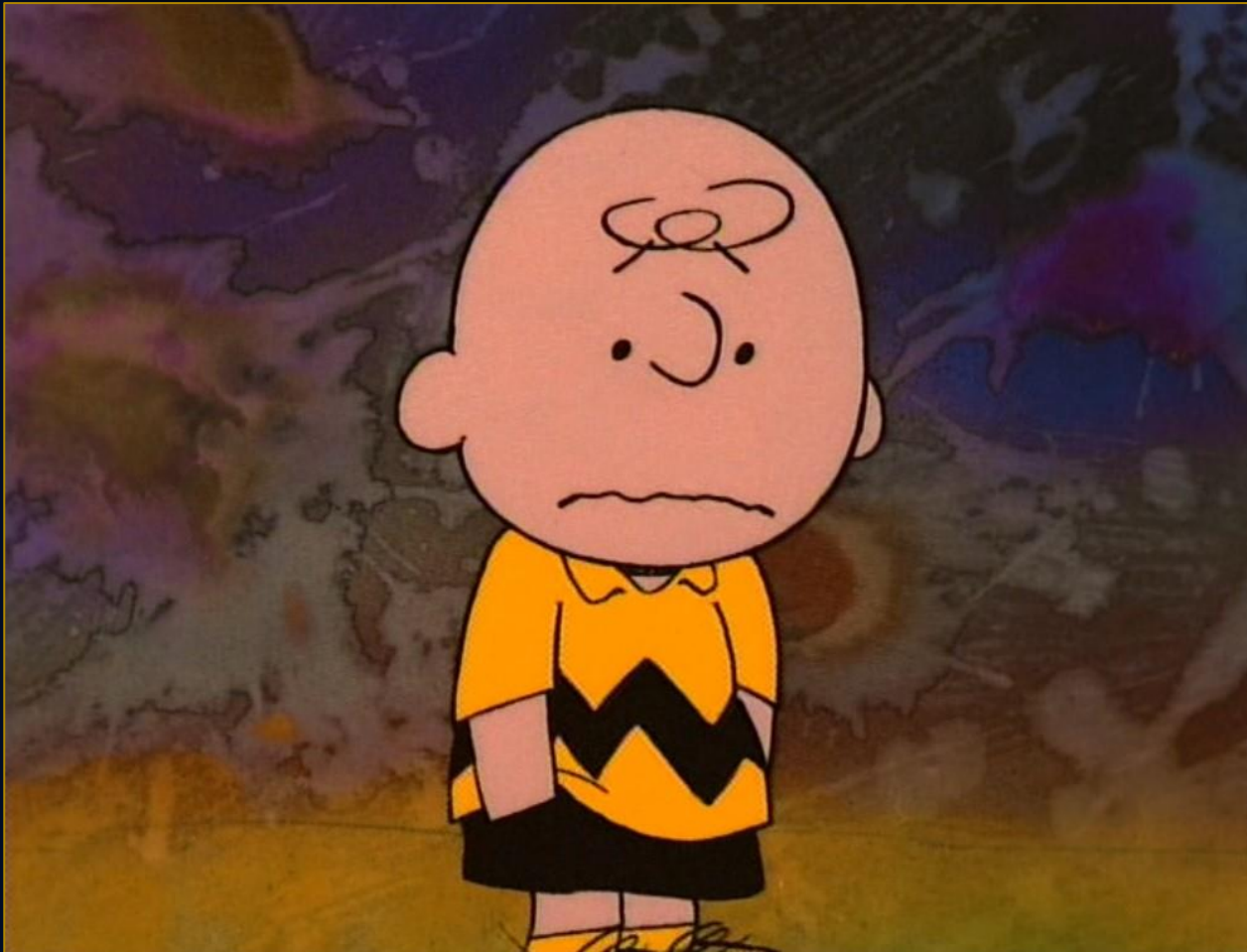
The problem is:

*Sin*

The solution is:

*Repentance*

## Deep Lasting Change



Psychologist:

The problem is:

*Failure to Cope*

The solution is:

*Mindfulness*

## Deep Lasting Change



These three are but  
a small sample of  
the hundreds of  
human solutions to  
human problems.

## Deep Lasting Change

The problem is that “solutions” to our problems often create new and bigger problems for us...

Problems: *sadness, loneliness, discouragement, depression*

Solutions: *alcohol, anger, binge eating, pornography*



## Deep Lasting Change

Jesus is about to go far deeper  
to help us embrace lasting change.

## Deep Lasting Change

He says there are many ways to change,  
but if we don't incorporate His power  
to do it, we will change...

and be worse off for it.

Deep Lasting Change

Luke 11.24-26

When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person,  
it passes through waterless places seeking rest,  
and finding none it says,  
'I will return to my house from which I came.'

Deep Lasting Change

Luke 11.24-26

And when it comes, it finds the house swept  
and put in order.

Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more  
evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there.

Deep Lasting Change

Luke 11.24-26

And the last state of that person  
is worse than the first.

## Deep Lasting Change

If we change without Jesus  
we will be worse off.

## Deep Lasting Change

We are either possessed by Jesus  
or...something else.

Deep Lasting Change

# Power to Change

Tim Keller:





## Deep Lasting Change

You don't have to be a Christian  
to change.

## Deep Lasting Change

In the end, you'll be worse off  
than before.

## Deep Lasting Change

It's very possible for you  
to overcome your demons.

## Deep Lasting Change

What is Jesus saying?

## Deep Lasting Change

The soul abhors a vacuum.

## Deep Lasting Change

The only way to get  
power to change is to give  
yourself over to something.

Deep Lasting Change

*“Don’t cry.”*

*“Be a man!”*

*“Men don’t cry.”*

## Deep Lasting Change

He casts out  
the lack of self control...  
but what does he put in its place?



## Deep Lasting Change

...the fear of looking weak.

## Deep Lasting Change

Isn't it possible  
that's seven times worse?

## Deep Lasting Change

You can't have a good marriage  
if you can't admit you're weak.

## Deep Lasting Change

# Deep Lasting Change?

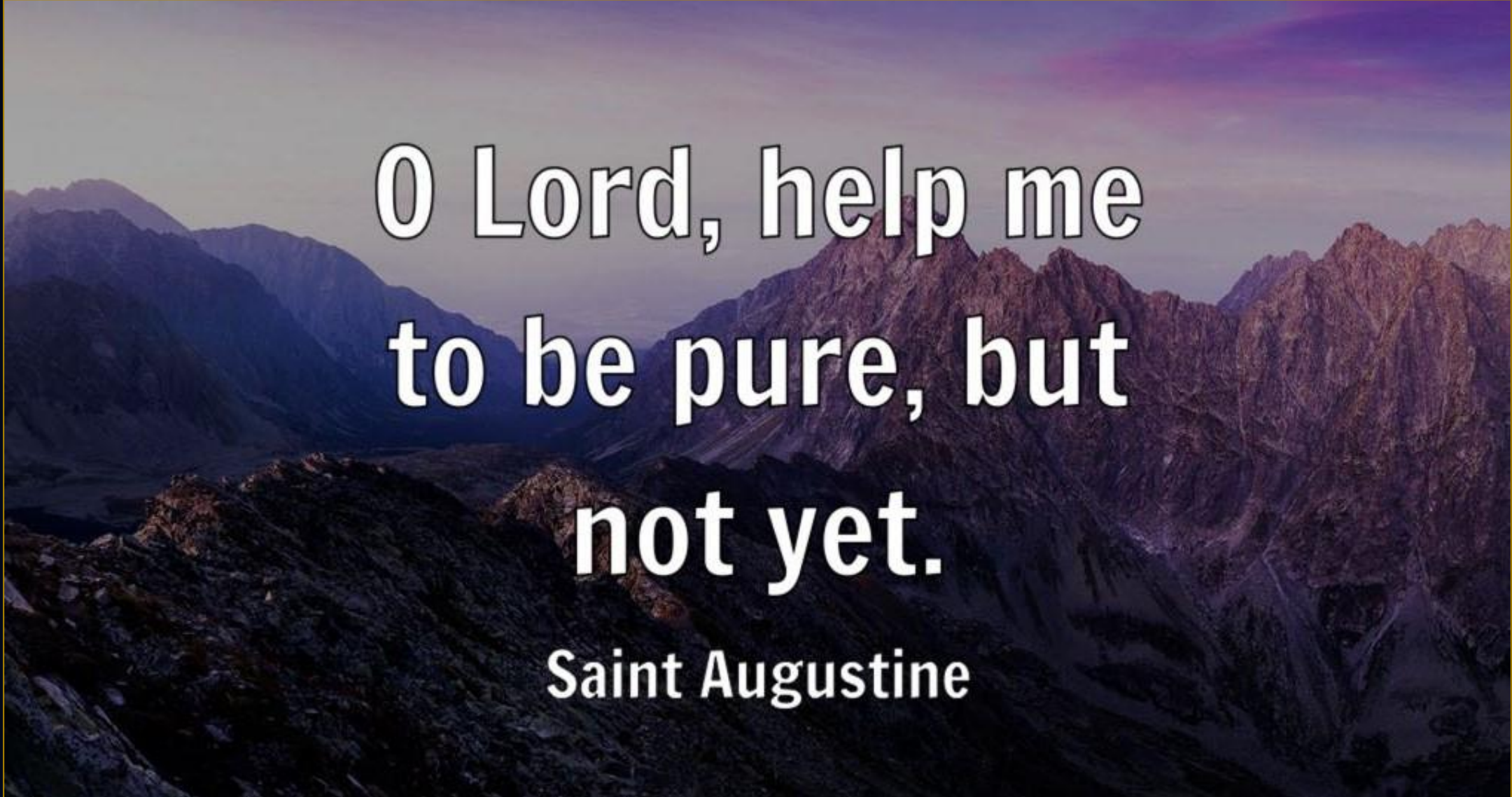
1. You gotta want it.
2. You gotta want it for the right reasons.
3. You gotta know where to go to get it.
4. Learn to live loved.
5. Embrace “*already and not yet*”.
6. We become like what we trust in.

Deep Lasting Change

# Deep Lasting Change?

1. You gotta want it.

Deep Lasting Change



O Lord, help me  
to be pure, but  
not yet.

Saint Augustine

## Deep Lasting Change

My marriage will change  
only when I am willing to change...  
and when I have a desire to change.

Deep Lasting Change

# Deep Lasting Change?

1. You gotta want it.
2. You gotta want it for the right reasons.



## Deep Lasting Change

I want to be a better husband.

I want to be a better wife.

We want to be better parents.

We want to be better friends.

Deep Lasting Change

Why?

Why do you want to change?

*(for God's glory or for yours?)*

## Deep Lasting Change

I would enjoy a more peaceful home.

My stress level would go down.

My spouse would finally be content.

I would gain respect, support, love.

My time could be spent on real ministry.

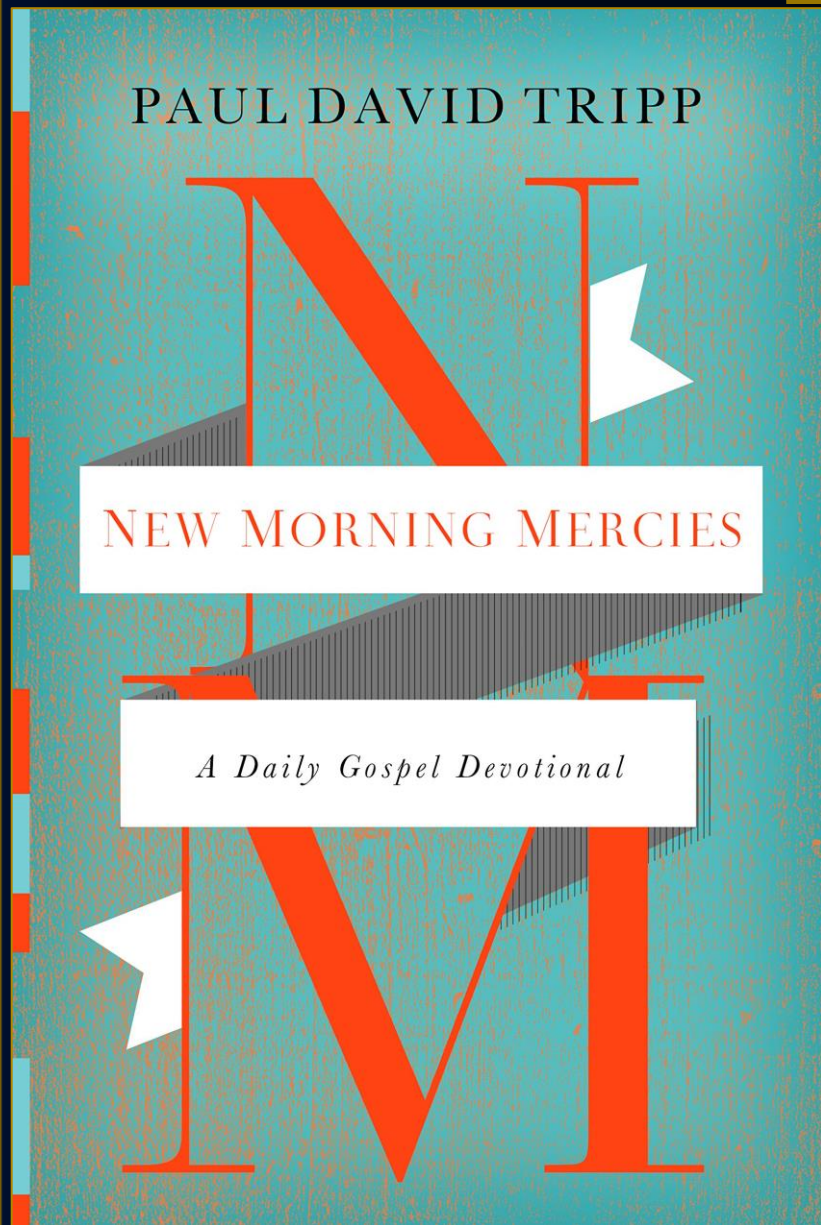
God would bless me with \_\_\_\_\_.

Deep Lasting Change

# Deep Lasting Change?

1. You gotta want it.
2. You gotta want it for the right reasons.
3. You gotta know where to go to get it.

# Deep Lasting Change

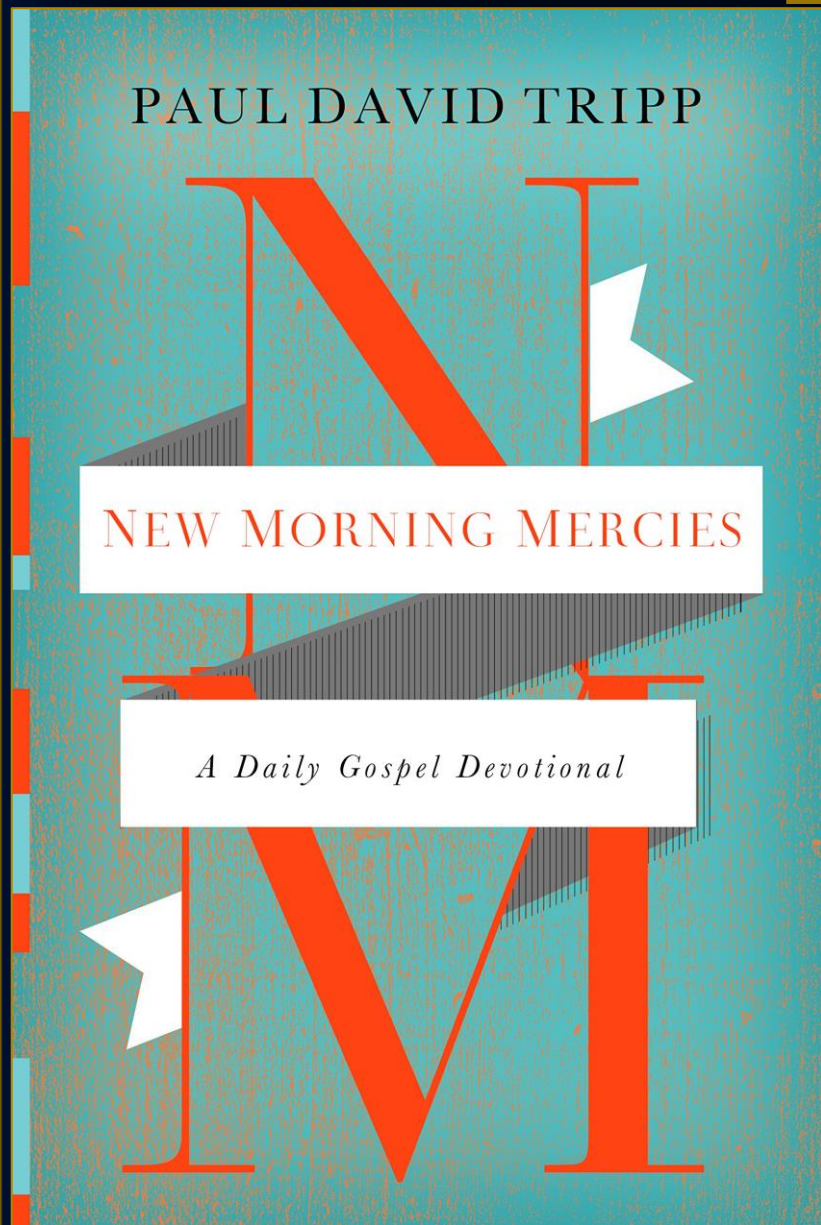


November 17

There is a difference between a person in whom grief leads to self-reformation and someone in whom grief leads to heartfelt confession.

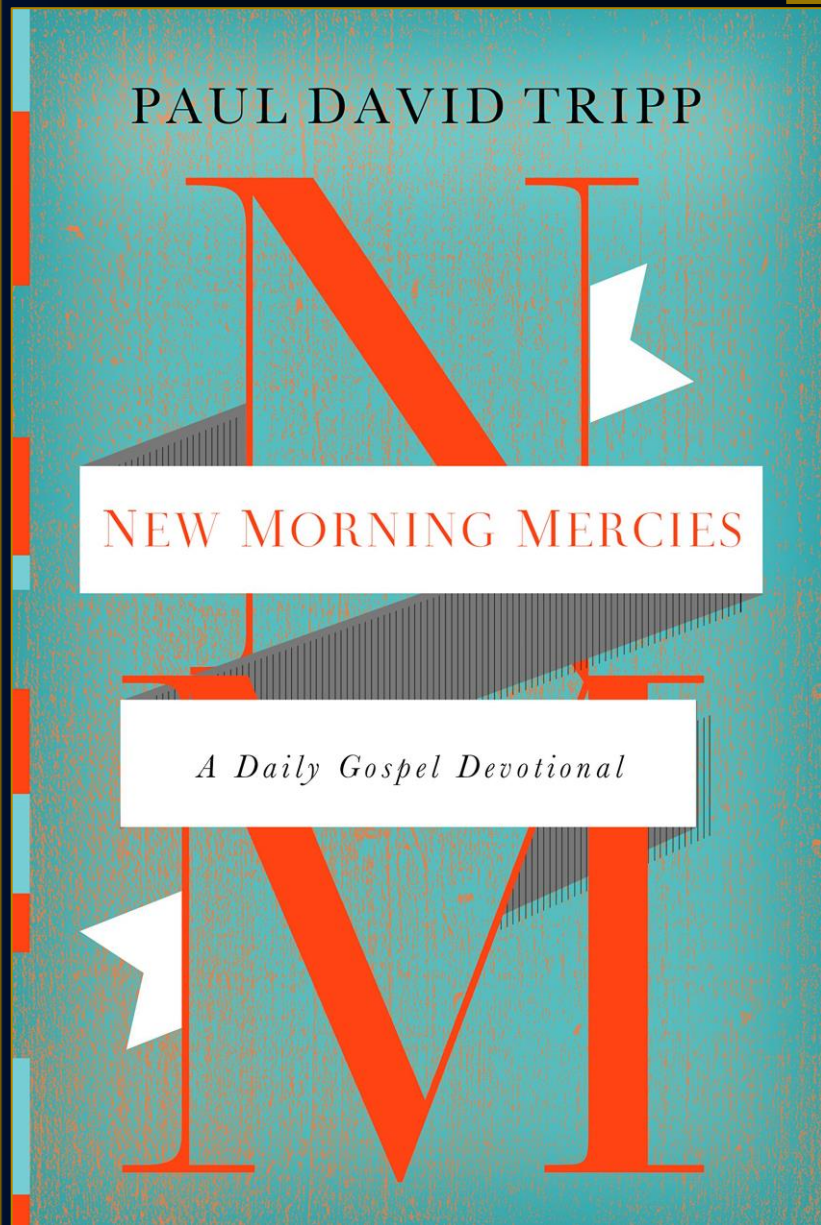
I think that we often confuse the two.

## Deep Lasting Change



The first person believes in personal strength and the possibility of self-rescue, while the second has given up on his own righteousness and cries out for the help of another.

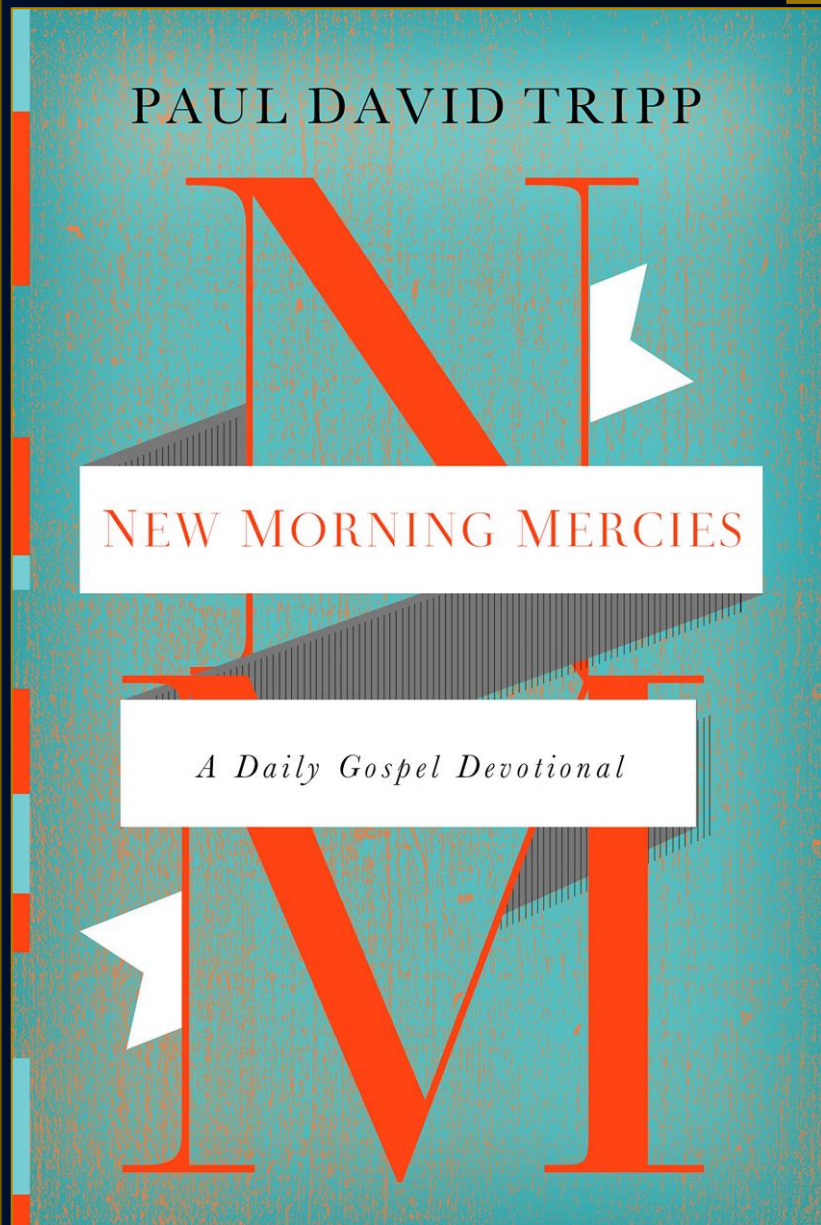
## Deep Lasting Change



One gets up in the morning and tells himself that he'll do better today, but the other starts the day with a plea for grace.

One targets a change in behavior, and the other confesses to a wandering heart.

## Deep Lasting Change

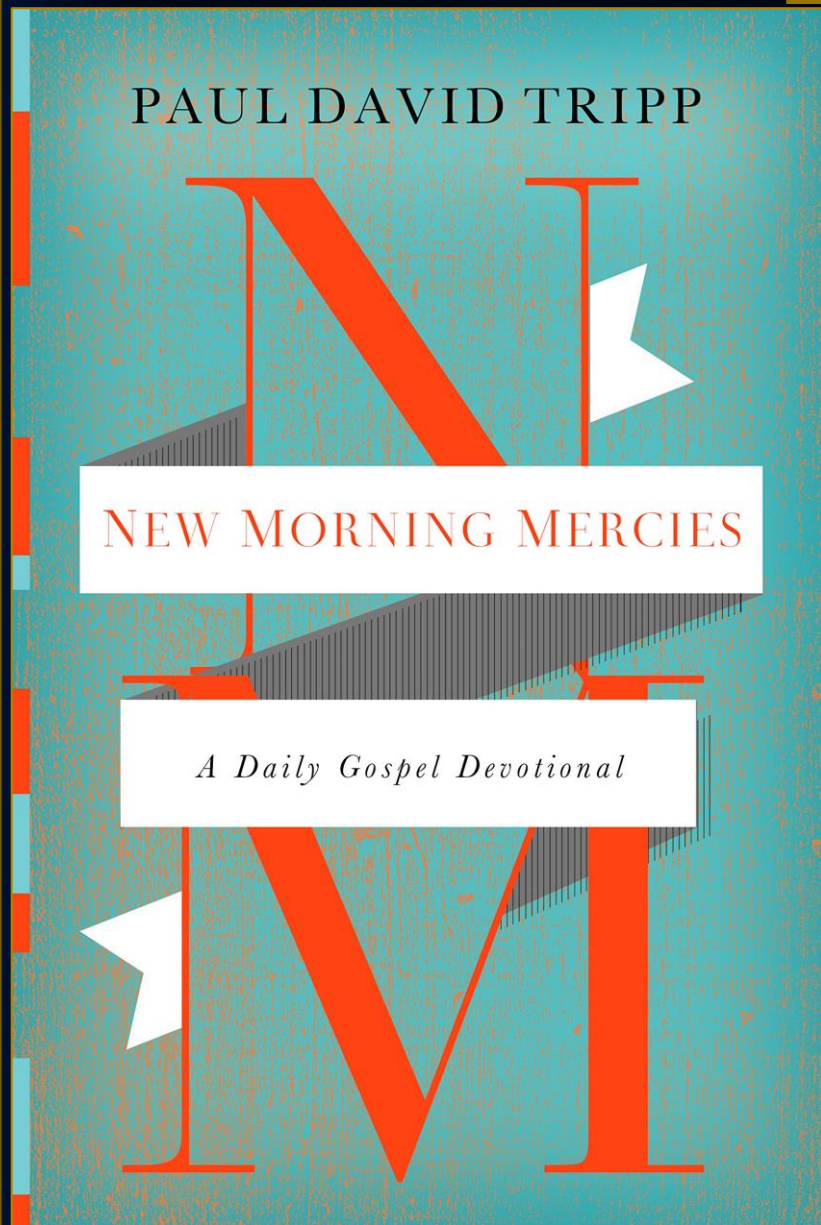


One assesses that he has the power for personal change, while the other knows that he needs to be given strength for the battle.

One has to hold on to the possibility of personal reformation, but the other has abandoned that hope and therefore runs to God for help.



# Deep Lasting Change



The heart then,  
encouraged by the forgiveness  
and presence of Jesus,  
longs to live in a new, better way.

Deep Lasting Change

Outward Behavioral Change

vs.

Inward Heart Change

Focus on the behavior and you get neither...

Plead with God to change your heart,  
and you get both.

## Deep Lasting Change

Deep lasting change will only occur  
when we <sup>(1)</sup> want the right things  
<sup>(2)</sup> for the right reasons,  
<sup>(3)</sup> desire a God given heart change...

## Deep Lasting Change

and <sup>(4)</sup> love others out of the  
abundance of Christ's Love,  
rather than out of our own means.

Deep Lasting Change

# Deep Lasting Change?

1. You gotta want it.
2. You gotta want it for the right reasons.
3. You gotta know where to go to get it.
4. Learn to live loved.

Deep Lasting Change

John 13.34

A new commandment I give to you,  
that you love one another:  
just as I have loved you,  
you also are to love one another.

## Deep Lasting Change

# How does Jesus love us?

- Knowingly (*Romans 5.8-10*)
- Sacrificially (*John 3.14-16*)
- Emotionally (*John 11*)
- Intentionally (*Luke 15*)
- Perfectly (*1 John 4.16-19*)

Deep Lasting Change

John 13.34

A new commandment I give to you,  
that you love one another:

just as I have loved you,  
you also are to love one another.



Deep Lasting Change

Impossible!

~ or ~

Possible?

Deep Lasting Change

Impossible!

~ and ~

Possible?

Deep Lasting Change

# John 15.9

As the Father has loved me,  
so have I loved you.

Abide in my love.

## Deep Lasting Change

John 15: Abiding is like a branch  
remaining organically attached to a vine...



*Easy to visualize...difficult to actualize. Why?*

## Deep Lasting Change

1. Because we're not plants.
2. Abiding provides constant nourishment during the mundane and uneventful times that make up 98% of our lives.
3. But we think life is found in the other 2%.

## Deep Lasting Change

We live in the **Tyranny** of significant events.

1. Salvation is a past event rather than a current reality.
2. The wedding is more important than the marriage.
3. Christmas Syndrome:  
unrealistic expectations of future significant events.
4. Scarlet Letter Syndrome:  
allowing a past sinful event to define my identity.
5. Change is a slow, steady process - not a quick event.

## Deep Lasting Change

God wants me to be a better spouse,  
parent, and friend for His glory  
and the gracious care of His loved ones  
...but I care about my glory.

Deep Lasting Change

# The Gospel Cycle

Tim Keller:



(4 min)



## Deep Lasting Change

Somebody decides to live  
for their own glory.

Deep Lasting Change

Estrangement

Alienation

Hostility

## Deep Lasting Change

Somebody reaches out...

Deep Lasting Change

Redemption

Reconciliation

Peace and Harmony

Deep Lasting Change

Electing Love:

*“I want you.”*

# Deep Lasting Change

Repentance:

*“I want to change.”*

## Deep Lasting Change

I'm the offended one!

## Deep Lasting Change

I know you're under a lot of  
pressure.



# Deep Lasting Change

Conviction of sin

## Deep Lasting Change

Why are we always  
so shocked and surprised  
when our spouses sin against us?

## Deep Lasting Change

The solution is not to lower our  
expectations...

but to be eagerly ready  
to respond in love.

*(“There’s grace for that.”)*

## Deep Lasting Change

# Deep Lasting Change?

1. You gotta want it.
2. You gotta want it for the right reasons.
3. You gotta know where to go to get it.
4. Learn to live loved.
5. Embrace “already and not yet”.

## Deep Lasting Change



The problem is:  
*Living counterfeit*  
*lives in the*  
*Domain of Darkness*

## Deep Lasting Change



The solution is:  
*Living in the  
already and not yet  
Kingdom of the  
beloved Son.*

Deep Lasting Change

Colossians 1.13

He has delivered (*rescued*) us  
from the domain of darkness  
and transferred us  
to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

Deep Lasting Change

Kingdom of  
Darkness

Transfer

Kingdom of  
his beloved Son

Counterfeit

Already or Not yet

Already only: *heaven on earth*

Not yet only: *doom and gloom*

Authentic

Already and Not yet

Already justified

Not yet sanctified



Deep Lasting Change

Authentic

*(Kingdom of Light)*

freedom

purpose

courage

Counterfeit

*(Kingdom of Darkness)*

chained

escapism

avoidance

Deep Lasting Change

Authentic

*(Kingdom of Light)*

transformation

process

intentional

Counterfeit

*(Kingdom of Darkness)*

information

event

distracted

Deep Lasting Change

Authentic

*(Kingdom of Light)*

grace

transparency

live loved

Counterfeit

*(Kingdom of Darkness)*

shame

secrecy

live insecure

Deep Lasting Change

Colossians 1.13

He has delivered (rescued) us  
from the domain of darkness  
and transferred us  
to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

## Deep Lasting Change

The truth is...I don't often live  
as if I've been rescued and transferred.

*(“There’s grace for that.”)*

## Deep Lasting Change

# Deep Lasting Change?

1. You gotta want it.
2. You gotta want it for the right reasons.
3. You gotta know where to go to get it.
4. Learn to live loved.
5. Embrace “already *and* not yet”.
6. We become like what we trust in.

Deep Lasting Change

Psalm 115.4-8

Their idols are silver and gold,  
the work of human hands.

They have mouths, but do not speak;  
eyes, but do not see.

They have ears, but do not hear;  
noses, but do not smell.

Deep Lasting Change

Psalm 115.4-8

They have hands, but do not feel;  
feet, but do not walk;  
and they do not make a sound in their throat.

Those who make them become like them;  
so do all who trust in them.



## Deep Lasting Change

What are you putting your trust in?

*“Our hearts are idol factories.”*

What (or Who) are you looking to  
for hope and help to change?

Deep Lasting Change

Hebrews 12.1-2

let us also lay aside every weight (*all idols*),  
and sin which clings so closely,  
and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,  
looking to Jesus,  
the founder and perfecter of our faith,  
who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross

Deep Lasting Change

Cody Carnes – Run to the Father

I run to the Father, I fall into grace  
I'm done with the hiding, no reason to wait  
My heart needs a surgeon, my soul needs a friend  
So I'll run to the Father  
Again and again and again and again

Deep Lasting Change

Hurt people hurt people.

Healed people help heal people.

Loved people love people.

Changed people help change people.

*Week 6*

# Deep Lasting Change

*And we all... beholding the glory of the Lord,  
are being transformed*

~ 2 Corinthians 3.18 ~