The Company We Keep Chapter 5

Threats to Biblical Friendship

1. Biblical friendship does not come easy and friendships we form in this fallen world will face frequent and varied opposition (pg 74)

There are a number of different ways biblical friendships can come under attack. Johnathon Holmes what he feels I the top 4 ways that these friendships are threatened.

Personal Sin

1. The word, the flesh and the devil are continually opposed to friendships that seek to reflect the relationships of the Trinity….. Friendships matter because through them you image God to a broken world, displaying the good news of the gospel which is a message of reconciliation. (pg 74).
2. Our friends are not the enemy when there is interpersonal conflict. Regardless of how either of us may feel in the midst of a disagreement. Our real enemy is a mixed up tumbleweed of spiritual forces (Ephesian 6) that tempt us to act sinfully or adopt sinful attitudes toward one another. (pg 75)
3. We may not think of interpersonal conflict as “spiritual” but this is exactly what Satan would want us to think and is part of his deception. We have everyday run of the mill temptations to sin against one another and this conflict is spiritual. (pg 76)

Four personal sins that threaten friendships found in Proverbs

1. Hurtful Speech
   1. Gossip and slander undermine the very things essential to any relationship; Trust love fidelity, and interpersonal rapport. (pg 77)
2. Dishonest Speech
   1. Lies we may speak about others whether in front of them or behind their backs
   2. Subtle ways: saying we will pray for someone, have someone over, making excuses to not get together with someone when you know you could make it happen, etc. (pg 78)
   3. Flattery
      1. Positive form of dishonesty. Drips praise with ill motives (pg 79)
3. Anger
   1. Anger emerges from unmet expectations. If we don’t get what we want, our sin nature will be tempted to respond with anger. (pg 79)
   2. Can be evidenced with rage but can also be less obvious such as coldness, isolation, pouting, withdrawal, sulking, sarcasm, malice, cynicism, irritation, and frustration. (pg 80)
4. Jealousy
   1. Involves aspirations. Different heart motivation compared to anger (pg 81)
   2. Jealousy kicks in when we start to focus, not on what God has called us to do or be, but on perceived gap between ourselves and others. Instead of obeying God we idolize what others may have. This could be anything; possessions, gifts, marriage, relationships, etc. (pg 81)
   3. Jealousy turns us away from Gods good gifts and causes us to reject Gods purpose and path for our life in favor or our own path. (pg 81)

An incomplete Grasp of the Gospel

1. Even as we are adopted children of God and counted righteous in his sight, at the same time we are- every single one of us- frail creatures who struggle with specific sins that are tied to our areas of personal weakness. (pg 83)
2. People intent on portraying a false image never let their guard down long enough to allow others inside. We often do this because our churches have a culture that classifies struggling Christians as inferior and undesirable. (pg 83/84)
3. This does not allow us to have authentic and transparent discussions because we do not want to portray and image of struggle.

False Expectations

1. We cannot expect to have “biblical friendships” with everyone. Even Jesus invested much time in his 12 disciples and even more time with the inner 3. We only have so much of a “psychological bandwidth” and capacity for deep relationships. No one can maintain large number of biblical friendships while also maintaining their quality (pg 85,86)
2. Biblical friendships do not emerge from striving or grasping. They emerge from gospel-motivated willingness to serve and love others and trust that God will gradually guide us into biblical friendships as we follow his leading (pg 85)

The Homophobia Bogeyman

1. We need deep relationships with people of the same gender. This allows for more transparency, honesty, candor and accountability.

Go over Dig Deeper questions!!!