

**The hard and beautiful work  
of relationships in Christ  
Class 2: Perennial things that trip us up  
and contribute to trouble in relationships.**

- Course Outline:
  - March 22: Why are relationships so important?
  - Tonight: Perennial dynamics that trip us up.
  - April 5: The usually hidden, yet most significant dynamic in relationships.
  - April 12: Things we can do to help build good relationships in Jesus Christ.
  
- Matthew 18:15-17 and Matthew 5:23-24:
  - There is no escape!
  - Pattern for confession and forgiveness.
  - A general pattern for relationships: Deal with each other directly.
  
- But we don't always. Why?
  
- What do we do instead: Triangulate.
  - Triangulation is when an outside person intervenes or is drawn into a conflicted or stressful relationship in an attempt to ease tension and facilitate communication.
  
- Triangulation can sometimes bring good outcomes, but often not.
  - Triangulation and boundary violations.
  - Triangulation gossip.
  - Triangulation and the drama triangle.
  
- Something practical to do: When talking to someone else about another person ask "What does this person need to know from the conversation?"
  
- Why this is so critical: the enemy hides in dark places; triangulation can create a place of darkness.

### Questions for Discussion:

- What did you think of tonight's presentation?
  - Was there something that brought clarity for you?
  - Was there something that challenged you?
  - Was there something with which you disagreed?
  
- Have you seen examples from your own life – good or bad – of the things that were presented tonight? What are they?
  
- What do you think about the subject of triangulation?
  - Are there good ways you have seen it work?
  - Are there ways you have seen it work destructively?
  
- Are there any changes you'd like to make for yourself based on what you heard tonight?