

THE SHARP EDGE OF THE TRIANGLE: MARRIAGE AND IDENTITY IN CHRIST

1. Introduction: Triangularity of relationship between husbands, wives and God.
Influences on Marriage

Outside Distractions, temptations, difficult circumstances

Inside Ambitions, expectations, dissatisfactions, desires

2. Abiding in the Vine

Sin or Faithfulness is determined by whether or not you are abiding in the vine.

John 15. 45

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

3. What is my “ Identity in Christ”

Big Question: Who Am I?

Practical Question: Why Do I Do What I Do?

Consistent with Identity in Christ:

Accepted in the Beloved

Not proving yourself

Free from being a 'pleaser'

Free from 'earning favor'

Free from feeling 'unacceptable'

Secure, therefore able to serve.

Bound to Christ,

Not bound to anything else

Inconsistent with Identity in Christ

Trying to prove yourself

Unsatisfied

Bondage to pleasing people

Insecure, unwilling to serve

Escapist

Despairing

Selfish

Lazy

Summary:

Consistency means being **content in Christ** to perform required duties with joy, recognizing the limits of our own abilities and circumstances, yet also recognizing Christ's purposes for us and His promise to change us from merely a branch to a fruit bearing one.

Inconsistency means being discontented in Christ so that duties are burdens that must be completed but not enjoyed, resulting in a perpetual seeking after **escape** from our circumstances, or suffering **despair** in them.

4. Escape and Despair

Areas of Escape

Feeling: “I Wanna Get Outta Here”

Response: Diving into something else

Summary: **Active Distraction**

Areas of Despair

Feeling: "I Can't Get Out"

Response: Hopelessness, 'Giving Up', Survival-Mode

Summary: **Passive Hibernation**

5. Triangularity Ephesians 5

21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

21 Mutual Submission = Being Yoked Together

22-24 WIVES :

-- called to submission to husbands

Submission = **Trusting Reliance in Hope.**

More about hopeful trust than bare obedience.

25-30 HUSBANDS:

- called to Christ-like service in sacrifice, preservation and elevation

1. **Responsibility for the relationship.**
2. **Love – requires PhD level study of 'what makes your wife tick'.**
3. **Self – Sacrifice = doing whatever it takes.**
4. **Purposes for your wife== to see her be *glorious*.**

Conclusion:

The Sharp Edge of the Triangle vs. the Sharp Edge of the Wedge.