FOR CHRISTIAN SINGLES IN A SERIOUS,
MARRIAGE-HEADED RELATIONSHIP

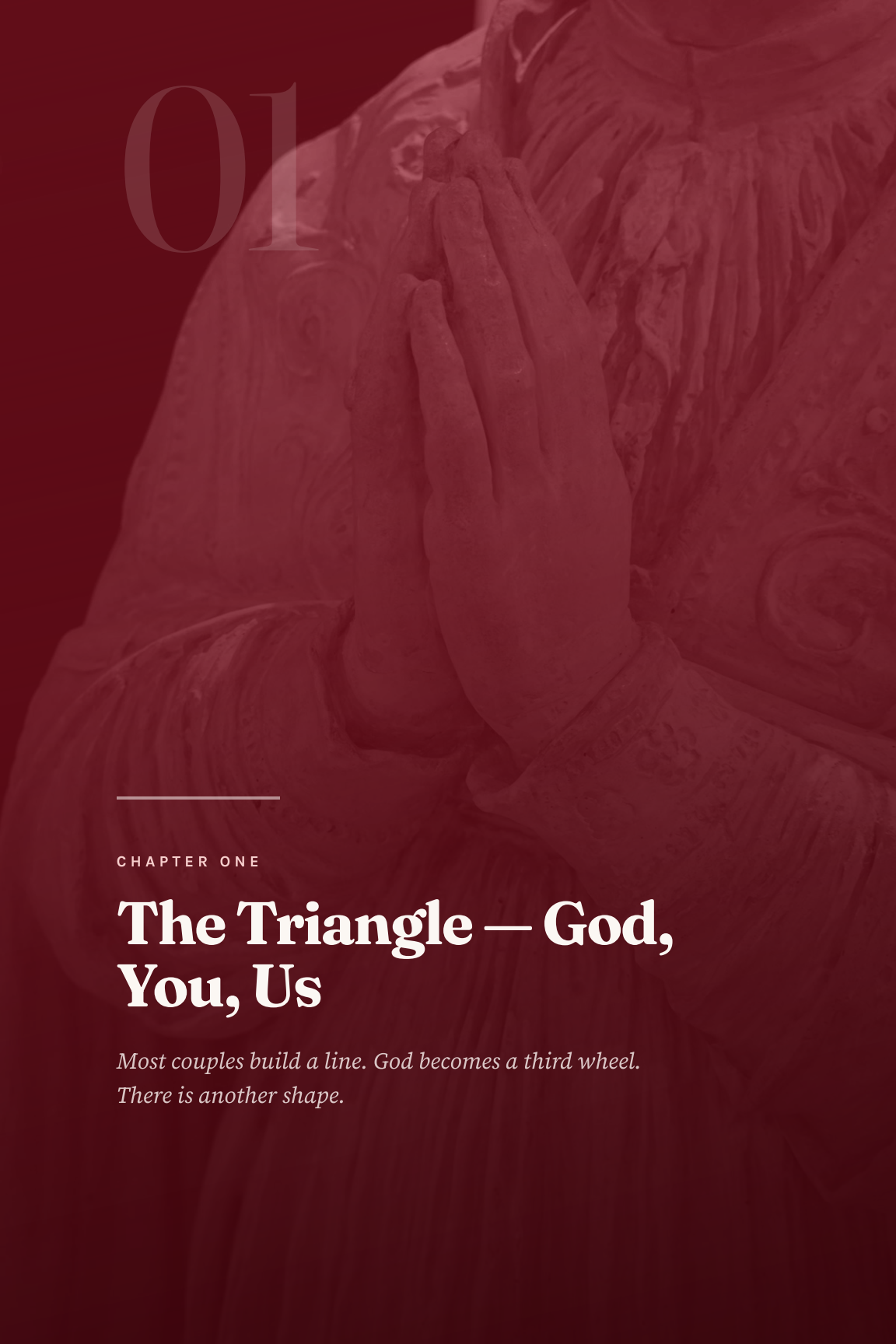


Love God.
Love Life.
Love Each Other.

How to build a relationship that is holy and happy, chaste and close, devoted and still dating.

DR. IHEANYI EJIOGU

WITH A 30-DAY DEVOTIONAL AND THE COUPLE'S COVENANT PRAYER



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CHAPTER ONE

The Triangle — God, You, Us

Most couples build a line. God becomes a third wheel. There is another shape.

Draw two dots on a page. Label one “Me.” Label the other “You.” Draw a line between them. That is how most Christian couples build a relationship — two people facing each other, with God somewhere in the background, occasionally consulted, mostly in the way.

It works, for a while. Two people facing each other can be very close. But a line has a problem: there is nothing to hold it up. When one person moves, the whole thing moves. When one person has a bad year, the other has to carry the entire weight of the relationship. When one person drifts from God, the other does not notice until it is too late, because they were never both looking in the same direction.

Now draw a third dot above the line. Label it “God.” Draw lines from God to each of you. You have drawn a triangle.

This is the first idea of this book, and if you get nothing else, get this one.

> THE SHAPE OF A GOD-HONOURING RELATIONSHIP
>
> God at the top. You both at the bottom. The closer each of you moves toward God, the closer you are forced to move toward each other.

That is not a metaphor. It is geometry. Two points moving toward a shared third point must move toward each other. You do not have to manufacture closeness by trying harder to be close. You build closeness by both of you moving toward God, and the closeness happens as a by-product.

THE THIRD-WHEEL PROBLEM

When God is at the top of the triangle, He is not a chaperone. He is not a rule you invite into the room to make things awkward. He is the shared point of reference that makes the relationship make sense.

When God is not at the top, something else always is. Sometimes it is the relationship itself. Sometimes it is the future — the wedding, the house, the timeline. Sometimes it is one person's need to be needed, or the other person's fear of being alone. Whatever sits at the top of the triangle governs the relationship, whether you named it or not.

So the question is not whether you have a god at the top. The question is which one.

Here is the hard version of this: **if you lose God in order to keep each other, you will eventually lose each other too.** Not because God punishes you, but because the thing you built was never strong enough to hold. A relationship that requires you to shrink your faith will eventually require you to shrink other things. And a person who has learned to compromise their centre for love will keep compromising it.

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THREE TESTS

You do not need to guess where God sits in your relationship. You can find out by asking three questions.

1. Who do you tell first? When something good happens, or something breaks, who is the first person you reach for? If it is always your partner, that is not automatically wrong — but it is worth noticing. God is not asking to be your emergency contact. He is asking to be your centre. There is a difference between telling your partner first and needing your partner to be God.

2. Whose opinion decides? When God asks for something inconvenient — a season of waiting, a boundary you do not want, a conversation you would rather avoid — what happens? If the answer is always "we will figure out how to make it work for us," then the relationship is at the top. If the answer is "we will obey, even if it costs us," God is.

3. What are you most afraid of losing? This is the honest one. If the honest answer is "this relationship," then you have found your functional god. That is not a reason to feel ashamed. It is a reason to pray.

A WORD ABOUT FEAR

Being afraid of losing someone you love is human. It is not idolatry by itself. Idolatry is when that fear starts making your decisions for you — when you cannot say no to something wrong because you are afraid of what saying no might cost you. The goal is not to stop loving them. The goal is to stop needing them in a way that only God can be needed.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE ON A TUESDAY

This is not abstract. It shows up in small decisions.

It shows up when you choose to be honest about a boundary even though you are afraid it will disappoint them. It shows up when you go to midweek service even though it is the only evening you have together. It shows up when you pray about a decision before you text them about it — not because their opinion does not matter, but because you want God's opinion to shape how you hear theirs.

None of this makes the relationship less romantic. It makes it safer. Two people who are both trying to please God do not have to spend their energy managing each other's egos. They can rest.

EXERCISE · 15 MINUTES, TOGETHER

Draw your triangle

Take a sheet of paper. Draw two dots at the bottom, one for each of you, and one at the top. Write “God” at the top. Then, honestly:

1. Draw a line from each of you to God. Is it thick, thin, or barely there? What made it that way this year?
2. Now draw the line between the two of you. Is it carrying more weight than it should?
3. Name one thing that has quietly taken the top spot. Say it out loud to each other. Do not fix it yet. Just name it.

Finish by praying one sentence each. Keep it short. “God, take the top.” That is enough.

IF THIS HELPED YOU

Send it to the couple who needs it.

One conversation can change the direction of a relationship. If this book gave you language for something you could not name, pass it on — to a friend, a fellowship, or a couple you are walking with.

EVANGEL PENTECOSTAL CHURCH · LAGOS

FREE PREVIEW · CHAPTER ONE

The full book is 77 pages, with a 30-day devotional and the Covenant Prayer.