The honor and blessing of a married woman are not only tied to her husband but also deeply connected to her in-laws—especially her mother-in-law.

In the entire Bible, only two books are named after women: Esther and Ruth. This was not by accident. God, in His wisdom, was not only communicating His grand message of salvation to the church but also leaving a special testimony for women to learn from.

The Example of Ruth

Many women today face deep struggles in their marriages. Often, these struggles stem from attitudes they develop about their in-laws before or after marriage—particularly toward their mother-in-law. I have counseled many women who come with marital problems, and a striking majority of those problems trace back to strained or broken relationships with their in-laws.

The principle is simple: before marriage, your blessings flowed through your biological parents. But after marriage, your

blessings of fruitfulness and peace flow through your in-laws—regardless of how difficult they may be.

Ruth and Orpah's Choice

The story of Ruth and Orpah illustrates this truth. Both women married the sons of Naomi (Ruth 1:4). Tragedy struck when Naomi lost her husband and both her sons (Ruth 1:5). Left a widow with no children or grandchildren, Naomi urged her daughters-in-law to return to their own people and remarry:

> "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me." *(Ruth 1:8, NIV)*

Orpah kissed Naomi goodbye and returned home. But Ruth made a covenant decision that changed the course of history. She clung to Naomi and declared:

> "Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you

> die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.” *(Ruth 1:16–17, NIV)*

This commitment was not only an act of love toward Naomi but also a declaration of faith in Naomi’s God. Ruth understood that her future blessings were bound to honoring her mother-in-law.

Ruth’s Reward

When Ruth returned with Naomi to Bethlehem, she served her faithfully. God orchestrated her steps to meet Boaz, a wealthy relative of Naomi. Eventually, Boaz married Ruth, and their union bore a son named Obed. The women of the town blessed Naomi, saying:

> “Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.” *(Ruth 4:14–15, NIV)*

Notice carefully: the blessing was spoken not merely over Ruth, but over Naomi, because Ruth's loyalty and love brought restoration to her mother-in-law.

Ruth, a Moabite (a Gentile outsider), was grafted into the lineage of Israel. Matthew 1 records her among the few women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus Christ:

> "Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king." *(Matthew 1:5–6, ESV)*

Think about this: Ruth's decision to honor her mother-in-law not only blessed Naomi's old age but also placed Ruth in the royal line that led to King David and ultimately to the Messiah, Jesus Christ (Luke 3:31–32).

This truth shows us that God often hides generational blessings in relationships we may be tempted to despise or neglect—such as with our in-laws.

Theological Lessons for Married Women

1. Honor unlocks blessing.
   Scripture teaches that honoring parents brings long life and prosperity (Exodus 20:12, ESV). By extension, when you marry, your parents-in-law become part of the “parents” God calls you to honor.

2. You cannot love the husband and despise the family.
   1 John 4:20 (NIV) reminds us: *“Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar.”* In the same way, claiming to love your husband while rejecting his family is a contradiction.

3. Blessings flow through relationships.
   Psalm 133:1–3 (NIV) says: *“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity! … For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.”* Unity in family relationships is a channel of divine blessing.

4. Generational fruitfulness comes through obedience.
   Ruth's obedience to God and respect for Naomi gave her descendants—Obed, Jesse, David, and eventually Christ. Galatians 6:7 (ESV) says: *"Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap."* Ruth sowed loyalty and reaped generational blessing.

A Word of Caution

If you distance yourself from your in-laws, gossip about them, disrespect them, or only pretend to love them, do not be surprised when your marriage lacks peace or your children struggle. Remember, dishonor closes the door to blessing.

The so-called "teachings" that encourage you to see your in-laws as enemies are dangerous. By rejecting them, you are rejecting your own blessings. Jesus Himself taught:

> "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." *(Matthew 5:44, ESV)*

If Christ commands us to love even our enemies, how much more should we love our husband’s family?

Instead of fighting them, bring every difficulty to God in prayer. Ask Him to soften hearts, to heal wounds, and to strengthen the bond. The doorway to your peace and blessings often lies in reconciliation.

Final Exhortation

Dear woman of God, do not despise your in-laws. If Ruth, a foreigner, could embrace her mother-in-law and step into the lineage of Christ, how much more can God bless you when you walk in love, humility, and honor?

> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” *(Matthew 5:9, ESV)*

Choose peace. Choose honor. Choose blessing. And may the Lord cause your marriage and your offspring to flourish, just as He did for Ruth.

May the Lord bless you richly.

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