

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, honor, and power forever. Amen.

This message continues our teaching series on Christian marriage—focusing on a critical, yet often neglected, area: the role of **in-laws**, particularly **your father-in-law and mother-in-law**, in building a godly and fruitful marriage.

1. Marriage Is a Covenant That Extends Beyond the Couple

Marriage is not just a bond between two people. It's a covenant that unites two families. This covenant comes with responsibilities—not just to your spouse, but to your spouse's family. The Bible tells us:

"That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh."
—Genesis 2:24

While this verse speaks of leaving the parental home to form a new unit, it does not suggest cutting ties or neglecting responsibilities to extended family—especially in-laws. In fact, biblical examples show the exact opposite: relationships with in-laws can be channels of blessing or

sources of unnecessary strife, depending on how we handle them.

2. THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: A Channel of Favor

Let's consider the story of **Ruth and Naomi**, her mother-in-law.

When Ruth's husband died, she had every reason to return home and remarry, as her sister-in-law Orpah did. But Ruth clung to Naomi, choosing loyalty over convenience:

"But Ruth replied, 'Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.'"

—Ruth 1:16

This wasn't just emotional loyalty—it was spiritual insight. Ruth recognized the spiritual covering and destiny connection with Naomi. That decision positioned her for divine favor. She eventually married Boaz and became the great-grandmother of King David—and part of the lineage of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 1:5-6).

Key Principle: As a married woman, your honor and spiritual growth are not only nurtured through your husband, but also through how you relate to your mother-in-law. Don't overlook the blessings God may want to give you through her.

Even if she is not perfect, humility and honor can unlock divine favor. As Scripture says:

"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

—James 4:6

3. THE FATHER-IN-LAW: A Source of Wisdom

Now, for the men: your wife's father is not just your wife's dad—he can be a **vessel of divine wisdom**. Consider Moses and his father-in-law **Jethro** (also known as Reuel).

Moses had direct access to God. He led the Israelites, performed miracles, and received the Ten Commandments. Yet, in **Exodus 18**, we see that Jethro provided a leadership model that even Moses hadn't

received from God directly.

"Moses' father-in-law replied, 'What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out... Select capable men from all the people... Have them serve as officials... That will make your load lighter.'"

—Exodus 18:17-22

Moses **listened**:

"Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said."

—Exodus 18:24

Despite being a prophet, Moses received practical help and divine order through his **father-in-law's counsel**—a powerful reminder that wisdom can come through human relationships, even when you're spiritually mature.

Key Principle: As a husband, don't disregard your father-in-law. His

advice may not come through prophecy or miracles—but God can use him to stabilize your home, guide your decisions, or even save you from unnecessary burdens.

4. In-Law Relationships Are Part of Your Spiritual Health

Honoring your in-laws is not just a cultural or emotional duty—it's a **spiritual principle**. The command to honor is broader than just parents:

“Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”

—Exodus 20:12

This includes **all parental figures** who become part of your family through marriage. If you ignore or disrespect them, you risk cutting off a channel of blessing that God Himself established.

Final Encouragement

Your in-laws are not random additions to your life. They are part of God's design in your marriage journey. Whether they are kind or difficult, wise or flawed, **God can use them** to mature you, bless you, and guide you—if you walk in humility, wisdom, and honor.

“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”

—Romans 12:10

So whether you're a husband or wife, don't isolate your marriage from your in-laws. Embrace your new spiritual family and see what God will do through them.

May the Lord bless your marriage, give you discernment, and fill your home with peace and favor.

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