



Genesis 2:24: God instituted marriage – *For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.*

OT Hebrew word: “awzab”- to loosen, relinquish, permit – **the idea:** to go away and commit self to another.

Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7; Ephesians 5:31

NT Greek word: καταλειπω to leave down behind, to abandon, have remaining. – *So there is this separation, leaving, usually easy for young people – but hard on parents.*

Genesis 26:34-35: *At the age of forty, Esau married two Hittite wives: Judith, the daughter of Beerli, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. But Esau’s wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.*

Genesis 27:46: *Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I’m sick and tired of these local Hittite women! I would rather die than see Jacob marry one of them.”*

Ruth 1:16-17: *But Ruth replied, “Don’t ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!”*

Mark 1:30-31: *Now Simon’s mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and they immediately spoke to Jesus about her. 31 And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she served them.*

HERE IN EXODUS 18:13-24, OUR TEXT:

Talking about Moses and Jethro, his father-in-law giving him advice: *the thing that you’re doing is not good. (17) you are not able to do this alone (18). If you do this, God will direct you, you will be able to endure...(23). So Moses hearkened to Jethro (24).*

WHAT ABOUT HOPE DEFERRED WITH IN-LAWS?

Is there hope deferred here? Yes!

What can we learn, or how can we prevent it?

What are some practical helps in dealing with parents, or your grown children.

SOME PRACTICAL HELPS IN DEALING WITH YOUR PARENTS AND/OR CHILDREN:

I. LEAVING PROBLEMS

A. Nothing to do with distance

Emotional closeness can be a problem –

Emotional closeness, (it ought to be with mate) can be a problem:

When there is too much emotional closeness with parent:

- It can hinder closeness with mate
- It can hinder conflict resolution
- It can hinder the proper roles of husband and wife
- Jealousy and bitterness can develop
- Parents can interfere with couples’ business, children
 - WHY? They know too much!

B. Can have a lot to do with parents...

Leaving problems can have a lot to do with parents:

- They can interfere.
- They can have unrealistic expectations.
- They can be overprotective, demanding.
- They can be partial, taking sides, even with the grandchildren.
- They can allow excessive dependence.
- They can manipulate, be inconsiderate.
- They can be jealous of the other in-laws.

C. Can have a lot to do with children...

Leaving problems can have a lot to do with children:

- They can have excessive dependence.
- They can have insecurity.
- They can be critical of the mate’s parents.

- They can gossip.
- They can take sides with their parents against mate.
- They can talk more about parents than mate.
- They can compare mother or father to mate.
- They can have partiality – their parents with other parents.
- They can make decisions with parents without spouse (like with vacations or Friday nights).
- They can allow parents to dominate.
 - Having the proper obedience to God's Word: *LEAVE!* is so important to avoid these problems.

II. LIFESTYLE PROBLEMS – HOW THINGS ARE DONE

A. Children with baggage – here's what can happen: "we should do it like mom and dad..." OR: respond opposite in a negative way (reactive)

Some areas of conflict:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work oriented | <input type="checkbox"/> Disciplining children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Way housework is done | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditions of Holidays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Display of affections | <input type="checkbox"/> What's done on vacations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money and its use | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization, punctuality |

B. Problem parenting

The way parents were - can cause problems:

- Overprotective parents – cause child to rebound to their care
- Overindulgent parents – child given everything, where there the other has had to work
- Over permissive parents – undisciplined children, may interfere with grandchildren
- Perfectionist parents – no in-law good enough, never satisfied with any decision young couples make

III. SON OR DAUGHTER, IN LAW PROBLEMS

- A.** Insensitive – demands, babysit, financial
- B.** Relating – communication, neglecting in laws
- C.** Give & Take – learn it. Sons/daughters need to be selfless
- D.** Age differences – careers, interests
- E.** Don't have unrealistic expectations –
- F.** Close/Distant in laws – being fair, etc.
- G.** Don't manipulate – son, daughter in law
 - Parents won't want to risk an open conflict...
 - A mother is more threatened by a marriage than father
 - Insensitive father to mother, now that child is gone

IV. HELP FOR IN-LAW CONFLICTS

- Accept your in-laws (Biblical examples)
- Learn to relate to each other
- Say nothing to your child you would not say to your in-law (or vice versa)
- Treat children as adult friends
- Respect each other
- No favoritism
- Advice, none unless asked or positive (E.g. Jethro)
- Speak the truth in love
- No financial arrangements – be careful here
- Don't compete
- Parents: get a life!
- Your own life continues, develop new activities, interests, honeymoon again!
- Don't write off children; but let them have their life.
- Nowhere is it written that they have to spend every holiday, every vacation...

CONCLUSION:

- God's word gives clear indication of in-law relationships and gives examples of people who sacrificed and honored one another.
- Are you doing that? Parents? Sons-in-laws, daughters-in-laws?
- Do you love your in-laws? *But they're...*
- The Bible says: "...love your enemies...", no in-laws are that bad. Watch your attitude