

SERIES:	Keep Calm and Marry On
MESSAGE:	In-laws or Outlaws?
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Genesis 28-31

MESSAGE SUMMARY

When two people get married, they don't simply marry each other; they marry into an extended family consisting of mother-in-law, father-in-law, and perhaps even sister-in-law and brother-in-law. These in-laws come in all sizes and shapes, and all personalities, and there is the potential for these *in-laws* to become *outlaws* to the married couple. Today we explore that relationship and see pitfalls to avoid as well as practices to apply.

DETAILED NOTES

I. Introduction

- A. Adam and Eve the happiest of all couples, no in-laws
- B. Man went to doctor for physical checkup, six months to live, live with mother-in-law
- C. Young husband who hated his mother-in-law, found a genie in a bottle, 3 wishes
- D. Serious issue of in-laws can be either a blessing or a curse
 1. Sister-in-law drives me crazy
 2. Father-in-law disconnected
 3. Mother-in-law wants to tell me how to cook
 4. Son-in-law kidnapped our daughter
 5. Article in *LA Times*, comedian being sued by mother-in-law for all the mother-in-law jokes she was telling
 6. Jay Adams, *Solving Marriage Problems*; The most difficult of all relationships...the in-laws
 7. In-laws can become outlaws, the difference between the two: outlaws are wanted

II. Four Roles: parents, God, in-laws, children

- A. Parent's role, to release their children
 1. Isaac releases Jacob from the security of the home
 2. Greatest gift: the gift of freedom (see Genesis 22:4)
 - a. Leave father and mother
 - b. Joined to each other
 - c. One day they would have children
 3. Quick advice
 - a. Parents: I am preparing them and me for the release
 - i. (Catch and release: fishing) They are lent to us by God, they belong to God (see Psalm 127:3)
 - ii. Not deserting

- iii. Not disrespectful
 - iv. A shift of allegiance
 - b. Young couples
 - i. Leaving is not just moving out of the house
 - ii. Parents can be dead and you can still hang on to them
 - iii. 65-year-old man, my wife has never ever left his father or mother
 - iv. Make your mate the most significant person in your life
 - v. Commend your mate in front of your parents
 - vi. Never use negative language
 - vii. Try to include your spouse in your family conversations, never leave them out
 - viii. Make it clear to the parents
- B. God's Role is to direct His children's steps
 - 1. Jacob's wondering what's gonna happen now
 - 2. You are releasing your kids to the care of providential God
 - 3. Priorities
 - a. Be the right spouse
 - b. Have a solid relationship with God
 - c. God is first priority and everything comes after that
 - d. God gives Jacob priorities: get married, have kids
 - e. Marriage ceremony, triangle, the closer you grow to God, the closer you grow to each other
 - f. Good example in the book of Ephesians
 - i. Chapters 1-3: your relationship with God
 - ii. Chapters 4-6: your relationship with people
 - a) Chapter 4: how to get along with anyone
 - b) Chapter 5: husband/wife
 - c) Chapter 6: parents and then employer/employee
 - d) Repeats pattern in Colossians and in I Timothy
 - g. God-given pattern of priorities
 - h. Number one: God; number two: spouse; number three, your children; number four everything else
 - 4. Keep this pattern to keep everything from getting out of whack
 - 5. Be passionately in love with God, be passionately in love with your spouse
 - a. That's the best gift you can give to your children
 - b. That's the best message you can send to your in-laws
- C. The in-law's role: be supportive of their children's choices, including their mate
 - 1. Laban had no regard for his daughter or his future son-in-laws
 - 2. 20 years go by, Jacob has his own family and business—they get into an argument
 - a. Laban says everything is his
 - b. He is all about him
 - 3. Wealthy business man wants to make son-in-law a 50/50 partner, son-in-law lazy
 - 4. Jacob was a hard worker
 - 5. Laban used his son-in-law to get rich, and Laban himself was lazy
 - 6. Girl fell in love and father could not stand the guy, happened three times, she finds someone just like her father, her mother can't stand him

7. The husband/wife relationship should always take precedence over the child relationship
 8. They are one flesh – the package deal
 9. Don't give advice unless they ask you for it
- D. The role of children is to honor their parent's significance (both sets of parents)
1. Rumor that Jacob was getting rich off Laban – not true
 - a. Jacob spoke against his father-in-law in front of his wives and brothers-in-law
 - b. Be respectful
 - c. Be very careful what you say about your in-laws to and in front of your spouse
 - d. Son-in-law bought mother-in-law a cemetery plot for Christmas...
 2. Good example of in-law relationship, Luke 4
 - a. Luke's mother-in-law lived with him
 - b. Luke asked Jesus to heal her
 - c. That's honor and respect
- E. Bring it down a notch
1. Don't be so tense around your in-laws
 2. Add some humor, if possible
- III. Closing
- A. Ann Landers—man writes in about his sister-in-law
 - B. Try to add a little humor
 - C. Prayer every week that marriages in this fellowship grow deep and strong
 - D. Hope that what we've learned so far helps all of us in our relationships

Publications referenced: *LA Times, Solving Marriage Problems, Dear Abby*

Figures referenced: Jay Adams, Ann Landers

Cross references: Genesis 22:4, Psalm 127:3, Luke 4:38-39, Ephesians, Colossians, I Timothy

Topic: Marriage

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