



JUST FACTS

In-Laws: God's Blessing

Jokes and folk sayings in many cultures depict the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship as one filled with thorny tensions.

According to Dr Gary Chapman in his book, "Marriage You Have Always Wanted", in-laws are really God's blessings. Our mother-in-law is not our enemy! Our parents and parents-in-law are a part of our lives. But whether we are newlyweds or an 'old married couple', how should we relate to in-laws? Actually, we need one another. Mutual freedom and mutual respect should be the guiding principle for parents and their married children.

Dr Gary gave two principles that must be kept in balance: leaving parents and honoring parents.

Cutting the Apron Strings

Marriage involves a change of allegiance. Before marriage, our allegiance is to our parents, but after marriage it is to our spouse. We must cut the 'apron strings'.

Wonderful Wisdom

Don't disregard father-in-law's wisdom. God often speaks through fathers-in-law and mothers-in-law. They are older and may have more wisdom than we. The mature husband and wife will consider carefully the advice of parents and in-laws. At the same time, we are not to put the advice of parents above the desires of our spouse. It's the godly concept of "leaving parents" and "cleaving to our spouse" that allows us to establish a new family unit under God.

How Do You Honor?

How do we honor our parents after we are married, without allowing them to control us? As long as they live it is right to honor them. Sometimes we do not respect the lifestyle of our parents or in-laws. But we must respect their position. In the providence of God, they gave us life. For that we respect them. Honor does not mean that we must do everything our parents' request. Honor is seeking to do what is best for them.

Respect One Another

According to Ms Leah Shifrin Averick, author of "Don't Call Me Mom - How to Improve Your In-Laws Relationship", each of us needs to feel important and appreciated. These feelings are fostered when we treat each other with respect at the outset of an in-law relationship. One newlywed told her mother-in-law at the wedding, "Thank you very much for your son". The mother-in-law still beams with pleasure 10 years later when she recounts her daughter-in-law's comments. A mother-in-law who tells her daughter-in-law, "I am happy that David chose you and that you are happy together", is off to a good start.

Respect and kindness are what each needs to enjoy this potentially wonderful relationship. Ms Leah added that a spouse should make sure that his/her partner feels valued as the most important person in their partner's lives. Many in-laws irritation diminish or even disappear when the married couple is secure that he/she is valued above all others in the marital relationship.

***We, staff and volunteers,
of CLM take this opportunity
to wish our Chinese friends
a Blessed Chinese New Year!***

**"You can
choose your
friends but you
cannot choose
your in-laws"**

*~ Author
Unknown*



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