

IN-LAWS

“Therefore shall a man **leave** his father and his mother, and shall **cleave** unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” — Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5-6, Mark 10:7-8, Ephesians 5:31

The process of *leaving and cleaving* began with God, not man. God created marriage, and then left fundamental steps for men and women to follow in order to have thriving, successful marriages.

1. Man and woman must **leave**.
2. They must **cleave** to one another.
3. This is the **only** way to becoming one flesh.

_____ : forsake, leave behind, depart from

Six steps to leaving:

1. The husband-wife relationship is now the _____ relationship in your life.
2. It means that you are more concerned about your spouse's _____ and _____ than you are about your parent's.
3. It means that you must not try to _____ your mate simply because your parents do not like something about him or her.
4. It means that you are not primarily _____ on your parents for finances, affection, approval, council, etc.
5. Sometimes we must make _____ that are unpopular.
6. Keep _____ issues personal (between you and your spouse)!

_____ : cling to, stay close to, join to

Six steps to cleaving:

1. Keep God at the _____ of your marriage.
2. Be humble and teachable and seek out _____ couples to learn from.
3. Prioritize other relationships as secondary and love for the _____ term.
4. Be content at (or below) your current _____ of _____.
5. Learn how to remain sexually _____.
6. _____ each other seventy times seven, keep short accounts.

Biblical principles:

1. A husband and wife must be _____.

“Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall.” — Luke 11:17

2. You're a _____.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." — Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

3. Appreciate your spouse for _____ they are, not what you _____ them to be.

"For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well." — Psalm 139:13-14

4. Each person must _____ to themselves.

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." — Philippians 2:3-4

5. Keep the _____ burning.

"May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer — may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love." — Proverbs 5:18-19

Practical tips:

In every marriage there can be tension as two people are united, along with their two different families. It is important to maintain the proper perspective with in-laws. The following are some brief helps on relating:

1. Get to _____ your in-laws! This requires prioritized effort, especially if they are some distance away.
 - a. Provides insight into your spouse's attitudes and behavior.
2. Don't expect your in-laws to _____ or _____ like your family.
 - a. Remember: Different families are exactly that — DIFFERENT!
 - b. Consciously start with a clean slate in trying to understand them.
 - c. Learn to love and appreciate the differences.
3. _____ and _____ your in-laws.
 - a. Without expectation of anything in return.
 - b. When they visit you AND when you visit them.
 - c. Be extra forbearing and forgiving when difficulties arise.
4. Be _____ in the time you spend with both families — within reason — because parents may be sensitive to this.
5. There is a blessing in honoring _____ sets of parents. There is no time limit on the following promise:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' — which is the first commandment with a promise — that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." — Ephesians 6:1-3

COUPLE'S PROJECT

Leaving and Cleaving

Record how you view yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, one being a definite **NO** and five being a definite **YES**. Each of you should complete this separately and then review your answers together. Share with each other the reasons why you answered in a particular way and discuss your perspectives.

	<u>NO</u>				<u>YES</u>
Financial independence	1	2	3	4	5
Established own residence	1	2	3	4	5
Desire to marry someone like your Father/Mother	1	2	3	4	5
Parents tend to offer frequent advice	1	2	3	4	5
Feel the need to give up friendships	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion questions:

What kind of activities or communication is appropriate between a new couple and their parents? When can those activities be detrimental?

How do you anticipate you and your future spouse spending holidays?

How can you best be a good witness to your families?