

## IN LAWS OR OUTLAWS - IT'S YOUR CHOICE

You are about to become an in-law. Webster defines in-law as "a relative by marriage." Knowing what the term in-law means as far as Mr. Webster, what does it mean to you? Write your definition in the space provided below and when finished, share it with your future spouse.

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Can we find any examples of in-laws in the Scriptures? Read the following selection and after reading each passage, ask yourself, "How would I have responded if I had been in the same situation?"

Genesis 26:34      *"When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith, daughter of Berri the Hittite, and Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hivite.*

Genesis 27:46      *"Rebekah said to Issac, 'I am discusted with life because of the Hittite woemn. If Jacob also should marry a Hittite woman, a native of the land, like these women, what good would life be to me?'"*

Exodus 18:13-24      *"The next day Moses sat in judgement for the people, who waited about him from morning until evening. When his father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he inquired, 'What sort of thing is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone while all th people have to stand about you form moring till evening?' Moses answered his father-in-law, 'The people come to me to consult God. Whenever they have a disagreement, they come to me to have me settle the matter between them and make known to them God's decisions and regulations.'*

*You are not acting wisely, his father-in-law replied. You will surely wear yourself our, and not only yourself but also these people with you. The task is too heavy for you, you cannot do it alone.*

Describe what you feel would be your ideal in-law relationship. \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe what you feel would be the ideal in-law relationship from your parents perspective. \_\_\_\_\_

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Please answer the following question concerning in-laws. After you have finished, share your answers with your future spouse.

1. In Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:7-8 and Ephesians 5:30, they all take about the passage “a man shall leave his father and mother...” What does the word leave mean to you?

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2. If your parents were to help you get started financially, what might they expect in return?

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3. How do your parents feel about your plans for marriage? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Are there any emotional ties with your parents that you feel will interfere with your relationship? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. How do you think your future in-laws see you? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What would you consider to be “interference” by your future in-laws? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. How did you get along with your mother and father during your childhood? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Describe your present relationship with your mother and father. \_\_\_\_\_

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9. How do you think your parents view your future spouse? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. What one thing about your future spouse’s parents do you dislike? \_\_\_\_\_

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11. What three things about your future spouse’s parents do you really appreciate? \_\_\_\_\_

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12. What customs in your home differ for those in your future spouse’s home? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. Describe how and where you would like to spend your first Thanksgiving and Christmas? \_\_\_\_\_

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14. What have you done in the past to let both your parents and your future spouse's parents know that they are important to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
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15. During the past two weeks, what have you done to express a positive feeling toward your parents and your future spouse's parents? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. What could you do or say that would let your parents and your future spouse's parents know that they are important to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. Do you know what expectations your parents and your future spouse's parents have of you after your marriage? (such as how often to visit or to call, their involvement in disciplining your children, etc..) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. Have you shared with your parents and your future spouse's parents what your expectations of involvement with them in your life after your marriage? \_\_\_\_\_  
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### **SOMETHING TO CONSIDER:**

What would happen if you were to write your future in-laws a letter sharing with them why you are looking forward to having them as your in-laws and at the same time thanking them for providing your future spouse for you? It may increase the satisfaction in your future relationship.

Please answer the following: In what way will the presence of Jesus Christ in your life help you in building a positive in-law relationship?

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