

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” - Psalm 119:105

September 23, 2007

In Tune with the In-laws

Troy Nicholson

Many jokes abound about the infamous mother-in-law (Did you hear the one...Maybe another time, my mother-in-law may read this!). Sometimes the relationship with the in-laws can be a real challenge and strain upon a marriage, but at other times it can be a blessing. Such has always been the case, as the Bible shows us.

Consider the example of Jacob and his struggle with his father-in-law Laban. Their relationship got off to a bad start when Laban switched daughters on Jacob when he first married into the family (**Genesis 29:16-25**). It cannot get much worse than that, but it did not get much better, either. When Jacob's flocks grew stronger than Laban's (**30:25-43**), *“Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed, it was not favorable toward him as before”* (**31:3**). He spoke of how Laban had *“deceived me and changed my wages ten times”* (:7). Obviously not an ideal in-law relationship.

Fortunately, not all in-law relationships are that bad. Moses experienced a good relationship with his father-in-law Jethro. He only had to marry one of Jethro's daughters (**Exodus 2:21**), and Moses watched his flock (**3:1**) and then left him in peace (**4:18**). Jethro later brought Moses his wife and two sons, received a warm welcome, and rejoiced to learn of how God had provided for them (**18:1-12**). He even gave Moses helpful advice (**18:13-27**).

The most beautiful of relationships is seen between Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi. After their husbands died and Naomi encouraged her to return to her home, Ruth stated these famous words: *“Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me”* (**Ruth 1:16-17**).

What makes the difference between the relationships noted above? The difference arises out of each person's relationship with God. Laban did not have the proper relationship with God, while all the others did. Those who are first committed to God will build the proper relationship with one another (**1 John 4:20-21**).

So what can you do if you have a difficult relationship with your in-laws? What if you have to deal with a Laban? Do as Jacob did and never sacrifice your relationship with God, knowing that He will help you (**Genesis 31:7**). In other words, don't be a Laban yourself. If an honest evaluation proves you to be like Laban, then repent. Doing so will keep you in tune with the in-laws.

A Lesson from Brownies

Troy Nicholson

John Rosemond wrote about the creative measures of one father to help his children see why they needed to avoid some of the material available for them to watch and hear.

The father listened to all the reasons his children gave for wanting to see a particular movie. It had their favorite actors and fabulous special effects. Everyone, even members of the church, said it was great. He also listened to all the justifications they gave for the movie's content. While it maybe contained suggestions of sex, it never really showed any. The Lord's name was used in vain only three times. The violence was not too bad, even though a bunch of people were blown up. After listening to what his children had to say about the movie, the father told them that they could not watch it.

Later that evening the father asked his children if they would like some brownies he baked. He explained that he used the family's favorite recipe and added a little something new. When they asked what it was, he calmly replied that he had added a little dog poop. He assured them that it was such a little bit that they would hardly notice. As much as he tried to persuade them, they refused to eat the brownies. The father then explained to his children how the movie they wanted to see was just like the brownies. Just as a little bit of dog poop ruined all the brownies, a little bit of ungodly content ruined all the movie.

How often do we figuratively eat “doggie brownies” with the material we watch and hear? How much ungodly content will we tolerate? In **Psalm 101:3** David says, “*I will set nothing wicked before my eyes*” (I am sure he applied the same principle to his ears.). David, the man after God's own heart, set his limit at nothing. Do we? If not, why not?

In **Psalm 141:8** David explains why he would set nothing wicked before his eyes: “*My eyes are upon You, O God.*” If our eyes and ears are always upon God, then they will not be upon any amount of wickedness. How could we willingly watch and listen to what God sent His Son to die to remove from us?

The next time you are tempted to justify a little bit of sin, remember the doggie brownies. Just as any amount of dog poop is too much for our stomach, any amount of sin is too much for our soul.

“The nations shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth Your glory.”

– Psalm 102:15

Family News

Virginia Bryant is doing well after surgery, waiting for results.

Quinton Coppage has been diagnosed with an allergy to flour.

Metty Fain remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.

Elmo Ferrell remains in room 101-A at NHC.

Sandra Hunt has a doctor's appointment Tuesday that may lead her closer to shoulder surgery.

Allen Malone returns home from Vietnam on Friday.

Cotton Read is in the process of getting an appointment at the VA Hospital regarding some needed medicine.

Andy Richards, from our old neighborhood, recently had a stroke that caused him to lose his truck-driving job/license. Other issues are making it difficult for him to find another job. Remember him in prayer.

Laura Reed remains in room 103-B at NHC for therapy.

Ame White has the symptoms of pneumonia, has not gone to doctor.

Robert Wray fell last weekend and cracked his pelvis bone. He is sore but at home.

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **David and Linda Bansemer** (KY), **Cindi Malone** (MS), **Jennifer Nicholson and kids** (AL am).

New Reports from men we support: **Allen Malone** (Vietnam).

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"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).