

Should You View God as Your Father-in-Law?

Regardless of the current ages of your children, most of you will one day become an in-law to your children's spouse. When you are an in-law, this is a totally different relationship than being a father or mother of a child. You are 100 percent trusting that this man or woman will be responsible to genuinely love, honor and cherish your child. You cannot control or really influence what that person does, but how they love your child does impact you.

Actually, I think how they love your child will be the largest factor by far as to how you feel toward that son or daughter-in-law. Their love or lack of love for your child is a primary factor in your relationship with them.

The expectation that this son or daughter-in-law will love, honor and cherish their spouse is no different with God. God as a Father-in-law expects you to love your spouse. He expects us to learn the way to love and serve our spouses, demonstrating His love and your love to them on a consistent, though imperfect, basis.

Have you ever thought of what God the Father-in-law's expectations are for you in your marriage? When you take a moment to think about this, how do you think you are doing in regard to His expectations of you as a son or daughter-in-law?

I have known God as my Father-in-law for many years. He is kind. He gives me revelation and wisdom to love and serve Lisa. He constantly reminds me of her value to Him. Honestly, I think He smiles upon me when I am getting this loving and serving thing right toward Lisa.

Unlike our earthly in-laws, our Father-in-law, God, has unlimited resources for us to carry out His expectations of

excellence in serving and loving our spouses. Think through with me about all He has given to you to enable you to be an excellent, loving servant to your spouse.

First, He gave you the death of His Son so you could break strongholds of sin in your life in order to serve with excellence. He has given you the gift of the Holy Spirit to live inside you to help you be an excellent son-in-law or daughter-in-law. He has given you the Word of God, the Bible, to help you grow daily in the wisdom of how to love.

He has given you a community of faith in the local church. There you see love being worked out in people's lives. He has given you finances, time and a heart touched by His grace and love so you can be an excellent son or daughter-in-law.

God has done quite a bit for me to enable me to be successful as a loving servant toward my spouse. I will never be able to say He did not give me all I needed to love and serve my wife well.

How about you? Has the Father lavished resources and opportunities on you to love and serve your spouse with excellence? The answer is yes for all of us for whom Jesus is Lord. How we utilize these amazing resources of God is up to us, but I do not think any of us can argue that He has not amply supplied resources for us to be in-laws of God.

Another resource I love and encourage couples to use is prayer. By this I do not mean your daily couples' prayer, though it is a great idea to have that in your life. It is true that this practice can only lead to God having good feelings toward you as you bring your spouse to Him every day in joint prayer. I am talking instead of praying directly to God, the Father-in-law.

I provide below both male and female examples of what this prayer might sound like at critical times when you reconnect after one or both finish working for the day.

John praying as he pulls into the driveway or garage of his house:

“Father-in-law God, I am about to enter the zone here at my house. My wife has served endlessly today and is probably quite spent. Give me wisdom to see what needs to be done with the children, the house or just her heart. Father-in-law God, give me the energy for the first hour or so to serve well with a great attitude and put my needs last for at least an hour or so. Please hear your son-in-law’s prayer. I love you, Jesus.”

Jane’s prayer for the Father-in-law God as she sees John pulling up to the house:

“Father-in-law God, thank you for a great husband who worked hard today to provide for our family, as this is one of the ways he loves the children and me. Let my kiss remind him he has a lover, not just a wife. Give me wisdom to know how to encourage him and thank him tonight for what he does around here. I love you, Father, and I thank you for the opportunity to show and speak love to your son today.”

Imagine if you prayed like this every day for a week, month or years. You would start getting the Father’s heart for your spouse. You would be more grateful and energized in your marriage—at least that is how it affects me. When I pray to Father-in-law God, acknowledging Lisa as His gift to me, it changes my attitude and energy as I enter my marriage and family. With that energy, I feel less self-centered and entitled to get my needs met above all, and almost naturally move toward serving without having a negative attitude about it.

Try the Father-in-law prayer for a while. See what this simple prayer can do for you and your marriage. {eoa}

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