

- 1. What was your first impression of your in-law? How did this experience shape your expectations of the relationship from that point forward?
- 2. In what situations are you tempted to despair because you are tired of waiting for God to act?
- 3. What mixture of faith and selfishness do you see in your life?
- 4. What challenges are you experiencing in your in-law relationship?
- 5. Have you made a wrong choice in your words or actions that have damaged your in-law relationship?
- 6. How is God meeting you in your place of sin, loneliness, or hardship?
- 7. Have you made any room in your head or heart for God to work in your in-law relationship? Or have you closed yourself off, expecting the worst? Why?

CHAPTER 2

- 1. What part of Ruth and Naomi's story do you relate to the most?
- 2. How do you typically define *love*? Are you living up to that definition? How has this chapter encouraged or challenged your view?
- 3. When you think of your in-law relationship, where might you be refusing to show up to what love requires, regardless of the other person's actions? Why do you think this is the case?
- 4. How do these truths from Ruth impact your thoughts and actions toward your in-law who is different from you?
- 5. Whatever your in-law's situation, God offers you an opportunity to trust him. Will you ask God for faith to trust him?
- 6. What challenges or blessings in your life feel like they "just so happened"? In what ways is God clearly at work in these situations?
- 7. In what ways is God doing more in you than through you right now? What inside of you needs to change?
- 8. What are you afraid to pray for when it comes to your in-law relationship? What holds you back from consistently running to God in prayer with these desires and requests? How does this chapter speak to this?

- 1. What does it mean to "leave and cleave"?
- 2. How does marriage create a new identity?
- 3. How have you pursued oneness in your marriage? How can you help your adult children pursue oneness in their marriages?
- 4. What are some practical ways that a mother-in-law (MIL) can advocate for her daughter-in-law's (DIL) marriage?
- 5. What are the dangers of a couple being emotionally or financially dependent on their parents (or vice versa)? What are the dangers of this for the parents? Are there any unhealthy emotional or financial ties in your in-law relationship? What's a good next step for addressing those?
- 6. How can you (DIL) honor your in-laws and parents while still leaving and cleaving to your spouse? How can you (MIL) be generous and loving toward your child's marriage while still allowing them to leave and cleave together?
- 7. This chapter listed four ideas for honoring your in-laws: words, time, tangible help, and prayer. In which of these four are you strongest? Weakest? How might you take a small step toward developing the area you feel weakest in?

- 1. For Barb and Stacy, expectations seem to reveal themselves during holiday gatherings. What about you? What situations tend to reveal your expectations of your in-law?
- 2. What general expectations do you have for your relationship with your in-law? Where do you think those expectations came from?
- 3. When you are not walking in step with the Spirit, how do you typically handle those unmet expectations (retaliation, cold shoulder, screaming, withdrawal, bitterness, etc.)?
- 4. Examine your own heart as you consider your answer to the previous question. Why do you think you resort to these kinds of reactions? What do you think this response will gain you?
- 5. Remember that God equips us to love our in-law through the power of his Holy Spirit. Consider the four principles listed in this chapter—the ones that we sometimes forget to specifically apply to our MIL or DIL. Which of these challenges you most? Why?
- 6. What encourages you most regarding what we can expect from God? Why?
- 7. Do you lean more toward idealistic expectations of your in-law or toward expecting the worst? How has this kept you from pursuing God's love and hope in your in-law relationship?

CHAPTER 5

- 1. How do you normally communicate with your in-laws?
- 2. What can you learn about initiating conversations from Jesus' dialogue with the woman at the well (John 4)? What cultural divides did he cross? How can you be willing to move beyond the norm to serve and converse with your in-law?
- 3. How might God want you to show flexibility in your relationship with your in-law?
- 4. What steps can you take this month to love your husband or son by loving your in-law?
- 5. When you think of your in-law, have you treated communication with her as a means to communion? If not, what has communication with her been a means to for you? Asked another way, what's your real goal when you communicate with her? What does this reveal about your broader view of communication with God?
- 6. Consider the eight ways to nurture communion with your in-law, listed in this chapter. Which comes easiest to you? Which feels hardest? Why? How might you cultivate growth in your area of weakness?

- 1. When you think of the "wars and fights" happening in your life—whether with your in-law or anyone else—what would you say the source of these conflicts is? What's causing them? How does your answer square with James 4:1?
- 2. Why do you think it's easy to blame others as the source of our conflicts?
- 3. How do you typically view conflicts in general? How has this chapter influenced the way you view them moving forward?
- 4. Re-read Ephesians 2:12-18. Those who were far away are "brought near" by what? What does blood signify?
- 5. If Christ's death-to-self and sacrifice is what created relational closeness between us and God, what does that imply for the relational closeness we want to experience with our in-law who might feel "far off" right now?
- 6. Recall the worldly ways of handling relational conflict. Which side of the spectrum do you tend toward? Why?
- 7. Which of the five practical steps for peacemaking is hardest for you? Why? Which of these steps do you need to implement with your in-law this week or month?

- 1. What stands out to you about the role changes for both mother-in-law and daughter-in-law? In what ways do you feel disoriented by the shifting landscape?
- 2. What are you asking God to do in a tense time you're experiencing with your in-law?
- 3. This chapter explored the reality of differences. What is the biggest difference between you and your in-law? How might you celebrate that difference instead of feeling annoyed or threatened by it? In what way might that difference help balance you out?
- 4. What would need to change for you to become an encourager like Moses?
- 5. Of all the ideas listed in this chapter for coming alongside your in-law, which is most challenging to you? Why? How might you address that weakness in the coming days?
- 6. Let's get practical. In what ways will you plan to come alongside your in-law in the next month? Who in your life might hold you accountable to this, even when it gets hard?
- 7. What have you learned about Jesus' service that impacts your in-law relationship?
- 8. What current stressful situation are you facing with your in-law? How might this be an opportunity to shape your in-law's view of God?

CHAPTER 8

- 1. Which story in this chapter spoke to you the most?
- 2. What is the biggest difference between your walk with God and your in-law's?
- 3. When have you found it hard to accept your in-law's choices or convictions?
- 4. How do you typically respond when you and your in-law disagree on something convictional?
- 5. Can you describe a time when God gave you strength to deny yourself instead of demanding your own way? How might that memory give you faith for your current disagreement with your in-law?
- 6. What are the three ways this chapter recommends for handling our differences in love? Which of those is hardest for you? Why?
- 7. Consider this section in this chapter that describes how to handle an in-law who does not know the Lord. What stands out to you most? How does this section encourage you? How does it challenge you?

- 1. What trials have you experienced in life?
- 2. What is a meaningful way that someone ministered to you in the midst of your suffering? How might God be preparing to do the same for your in-law?
- 3. In this chapter, we explored how Scripture exhorts us when we experience trials. Which teaching encouraged you most? Challenged you most?
- 4. In what ways are you prepared for suffering? In what ways are you unprepared sometimes?
- 5. This chapter offered many ways in-laws might come alongside each other in suffering. Which of these ideas seems like a good next step for you and your in-law?
- 6. How might walking through hardships with your in-law serve to strengthen your relationship?
- 7. Sometimes we are hardened to the trials of our in-law due to sin or past pain. Which of these is most often the culprit for your lack of compassion? To develop compassion, consider the life of your in-law in this season—what are some sorrows or struggles that God is opening your eyes to?

- 1. In this chapter, we outlined all the things love is, according to 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Which of these seems most difficult for you to display to your in-law? Why?
- 2. How might 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 guide the content of your prayers?
- 3. When God accomplishes what only he can do, he alone gets the glory. What circumstance do you face in your in-law relationship that you are unable to solve?
- 4. One culprit behind a lack of love toward our in-law is having a log in our own eye. What log in your eye might need removing?
- 5. What are some ways your lack of love may be hurting your in-law?
- 6. In what situations have you been trusting in your own strength to produce biblical love for your in-law (or anyone else)?
- 7. On the flip side, think back over the relationship with your in-law. How have you seen God provide what you need to love your in-law as God loves you? How might that memory strengthen your faith in this season?