

## **What Happens When Adult Children Have a Controlling Parent?**

- We are in the book of Genesis, we're in chapter 29. And this is gonna be super fun, at least for me. And for probably half of you, the question is what happens when adult children have a controlling parent? So go to Genesis 29, unless you're a parent, run for your life, right now, the exits are open, and start your car and drive away as fast as possible. If this is your first time and your kid brought you, well, you know why. Alright, we're about ready to do some great healing in your family. Before we jump in, let me tell you a bit of a story about a controlling parent of an adult child. Happened some years ago. We've got five kids, three boys, two girls, Grace can't keep her hands off me, just pray for me. It's like I do, I also have a brain. So we got five kids and, yeah, sorry, babe. So we got five kids, and our youngest, a few years ago, he came to me one night, he's like, hey dad, I wanna go get a haircut. He's around 12 years of age. Like, all right, well buddy, jump in the Jeep. Dad will drive. I said, where you wanna go? He's like, I wanna go to Sport Clips. I was like, okay, we'll go to Sport Clips. So we go to Sport Clips and we walk in, he registers himself, sits down and then they call his name and the lady comes over. She's like, well, how do you want his haircut? I was like, ask him, it's his head. He's gotta live with this decision. I don't have to live with the, whatever he, it's his head. He gets to pick his haircut. So he goes in, gets his haircut, comes out, pays for his haircut with his own money, buys some gel and jumps back in the truck. And we're driving away. Now in the middle, right after us, another parent and child came in, it was a mother and her 30 something year old son. She drove him to Sport Clips. And if you're here, shame on you, if you're that guy. So what happens is she walks in, he walks in, she walks over and registers her 30 something year old son for the haircut. They come out and they ask him, how do you want your hair? His mom butts in and says, no, no, no, you can't get your haircut like that it doesn't look good. This how you need to get your haircut. He immediately morphs into a four year old, starts to argue with this, he is like, but mom, that's not how I want my hair cut. They're having a argument. And she says, well, if I pay for the haircut, I'm choosing the haircut. My 12 year old son looks at me like, is this what it's like when people drink? So yes, son. So then he goes in to get his haircut. He comes out. He didn't like his haircut. He's whining about his haircut. He goes to get some gel. His mom looks in a way, can you not? She says, you don't need the gel. I checked your gel, you've already got enough gel left till your next haircut. You don't need gel. He's like, but mom, I really want gel. She's like, you can't have gel I'm not paying for gel. We get in the car. He then leaves with his mother and spoiler alert, total shocker, just so you know, he was single. And so there's no woman going, oh, all my prayer list answered. So we get in the truck and my little buddy looks at me. He's like, dad, thanks for not treating me like that. I said, son, just so you know, in 20 years, if you need a haircut and you can't drive yourself there, pick out your haircut and pay for it. You're not getting a haircut. That's not prophecy, that's just what's gonna happen. And the point is this conversation at Sport Clips between this guy and his mom would've been perfectly fine if he was four. Perfectly fine. At 34 time to pivot, time to adjust. And the point is this, that sometimes we love our kids so much and we're so invested and involved that as they change, we don't change how we parent them. And what was decent parenting for a little kid becomes controlling kid for an adult kid. All the kids said, amen. All right yeah, let's jump in. So here's what we're gonna do. We're gonna look at a guy named Jacob. We've gotten to know him so far. His grandpa is Abraham, his dad is Isaac. He and his brother Esau. They were twins. His

brother was born first. His brother was a man's man. His life was a little more tender. He spent a lot of time at home. Never really worked a job. Didn't have a hard day, completely over mothered, over mothered, completely, totally, entirely to where he never really had a struggle. He didn't have to make money, his dad was rich. Didn't have to go to work, his dad provided everything. Didn't need to make any decisions. His mom always told him what to do. Him and his mom, they were sneaky and tricky. Dad favored the brother, Esau. Mom favored him, there's division and entry. And he's a sneaky, conniving, high control, manipulative sort of passive beta male guy. And so what he does, he tricks his brother out of his birthright and his blessing. Well then his brother is murderous, wants to kill him. So his mom says run for your life. So he runs for his life. And right now he's leaving his parents. He's heading to his uncle's house. And this is the brother of his mother. He's never been away from home. He's never made any money. He's never worked a job. He's never made a decision. And here's what's gonna be shocking to you in the storyline. He's not a young man. See, sometimes what happens when you have a guy who's not maturing, you think well just give him time. Time doesn't necessarily create any maturity. At this point in the story, Jacob, there's a debate as to how old he is, but he's older than me. Like if right now it's like, I think I'm gonna move out and get a job. Be like, yeah, now that you're gonna be a grandpa in the near future, that's probably a good idea. He's wasted decades of his life. So here's what we see in the story. First, we're gonna meet this occasion at the well. Genesis 29:1-3. "Then Jacob went on his journey." He's running for his life from his tough brother. "He came to the land of the people of the east. As he looked he saw a well in the field and behold three flocks of sheep lying beside it. For out of that well, the flocks were watered. The stone on the well's mouth was large." This is to protect the water from animals getting in and spoiling the water source. "And when all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the mouth of the well and water the sheep and put the stone back in its place over the mouth of the well." So here's what's happening, never been away from home. Now he's away from home. He doesn't know who to trust, what to do, how to work, but he sees a well, and in that day the well was the third place. Sociologists today will tell us that where we live is our first place, where we work is our second place, where we go to see our friends and make memories and connect socially, that's our third place. So for some of us, third place would be golf course, gym membership, church, coffee shop, whatever the case may be, wherever your third place is, gun range. If you're new to Arizona, that is the third place. That's where you go to see your friends and maybe to meet somebody that you could fall in love with if you're single. So he sees the well, and he's like, okay, that's where the people are going to be. That's the third place. If I'm gonna get connected, I need to go to that place and connect with the people. And historically, and biblically the well is where a lot of guys met their wife. So for example, Moses and Zephorah met at a well, his mom and dad, Isaac and Rebecca met at a well, he's going to a well and he's hoping to meet a girl and he hope that it goes pun intended very well. So that's where he finds himself. Now here's the problem with Jacob, he's been poorly parented. He's been over parented, just like you can under cook and overcook a meal. You can over parent or under parent a child. And let me say this non-Christians are prone oftentimes to under parent, you don't really tell 'em much. You just assume, well, the TV and the government will raise them. And they don't. And then at 18, you're like, well, you're an adult. Go ruin your life. So, or make your own decisions, which is synonymous when you're 18. And so what happens is then the

Christian parents tend to go the opposite direction. We care so much we take it so seriously. We love our kids so dearly we tend to over parent. And if you had a parent who is a Christian and a non-Christian, you're bipolar. That's just why you are you, and this is what happens our world under parents. And sometimes the Christian parents over parent, he's been over parented. And the result is, let me say this parents, there's a really important distinction between being innocent and ignorant. There's a big difference. Innocent is I know how the world works and I know how to navigate my way through it. I know what's going on but I know how to navigate my way through it. Ignorant is I have no idea what it's like outside of my house. You have no idea. He's been so over mothered, over parented, over sheltered. He's totally ignorant. Like I said, he's older than me. There's a debate as to how old he is, but he's never worked a job. He doesn't know how to work a job. He's never negotiated a contract. So he doesn't know how to negotiate a deal. He's never pursued a woman. So he doesn't know how to have a relationship. He's never paid his own bills. So he doesn't know how to set up his own utilities and pay his own insurance, he has no clue. Sometimes when our kids are little, we love them so much. And we know, we know, we know, we know the world is filled with demons and sinners and wickedness and darkness, and we love our kids. So we don't want them to know about that. But at some point, they're gonna walk into that. And they're either gonna walk into that with their eyes open that's innocent, or their eyes closed, that's ignorant. This is where sometimes the kids that are the most shielded and sheltered, once they launch it is catastrophic. They get in trouble and they didn't even see trouble coming. These are kids that get into bad relationships quickly into addiction. They're scammed, they're hustled, they're stolen from, they're heartbroken and they're not ready for reality. That's this guy. The goal is not to raise children who are just pure, but also know how to be pure in a world that is impure. At some point, our kids are gonna leave home. At some point, they're gonna launch into the world. If they're ignorant, we are putting them in harm's way. If they're innocent, we're helping them to navigate. His problem is he's completely ignorant. And children can either learn lessons a little bit at a time or all at once, which is more painful. So it goes from the well to the welcome. Then Jacob said to them so he shows up at the well, Genesis 29:4-14, "My brothers, where do you come from?" They said we're from Haran. That's where he is supposed to go. That's where his uncle is, his mom's brother. "He said to them, 'Do you know, Laban the son of Nahor?' They said, 'We know him.'" That's his uncle. He said to them, how's he doing, "'Is it well with him?' They said, 'It is well, and see Rachel.'" This is where the harps start to play. This is where the filter on the video lens goes to glamor shots. This is where the action slows down, here comes Rachel, duh duh duh duh, his daughter is coming with the sheep. You know it's the right girl when she's got sheep. "He said, 'Behold, it is still high day. It is not time for the livestock to be gathered together, water the sheep and go pasture them.' But they said, 'We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered together and the stone is rolled from the mouth to the well, then we can water the sheep.'" Well, we wanna water the sheep. We gotta move this huge rock. "While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep for she was a shepherdess." Hardworking, lovely young woman. "As soon as Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, Jacob came near." He's gonna make his way in her direction. "And rolled the stone." Just so you know this is a massive stone that takes a couple of men. What is Jacob doing? Flexing, that's what he's doing. He's never been to the gym, but he's all in for this

rock. He's like, I'm gonna move it in front of Rachel. What's he trying to do? Show that he's what? Tough, is he tough? No, he's not. He's faking. He's faking. He's like the guy at the gym on roids. He's faking. "Jacob came near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother." Then Jacob, what? Kissed her, this is escalating quickly. Some of you single guys are like, are we gonna do that? No, no, you're not. We have fathers who are ushers standing by to deal with you as we speak. "Then Jacob kissed Rachel." And what? Huh? How many of you ladies find this guy awkward? Right? What are you, Miss America, why are you crying? "And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, that he was Rebecca's son. And she ran and told her dad." I met a strong, weird old man who cries a lot. And he wants to meet you. "As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him, embraced him, and kissed him." A lot of kissing in this family. This is a weird family. If you're German, you don't even know what this is like, but they're kissing a lot and brought him to his house. "Jacob told Laban all these things. And Laban said to him, 'Surely you are my bone and flesh.'" You're relative. And he stayed with him a month. Okay so here's the welcome, Jacob brand new believer. He just got saved as far as we could tell on the way to his uncle's house. Brand new believer, older, totally naive, not ready for life, completely ignorant, fully gullible and launched out on his own. Two things I wanna note here, he is socially awkward, right ladies? Any guy who's like, I moved giant rock. Socially awkward. Kids who are over parented are are what? Socially awkward, they're weird. They're socially awkward. You're like, no, not my kid. Yeah, no they're socially awkward. If they're over parented, they're socially awkward. 'Cause they don't get any time with their peers that's not with their parents helicoptering over and negotiating everything. So they never really learn how to be socially normal. He's very socially awkward and he is true or false ladies. He's emotionally awkward. How many of you you're like, hi my name's Jacob. Ah. You're like, I don't even know what we're doing. I don't know how to pro like very, you seem strong and aggressive now you're crying. You know, your ring tone is Elton John. I'm totally confused as to what I'm dealing with here. You're this flexing emotional disaster. Okay. And what happens is when you're over parented you're socially and emotionally stunted. There was no amen. None of the mothers were like, amen. Mothers are like, this is judgey I'm gonna post a review on Yelp, it's not gonna be good. So within this, he is also not prepared for the next season of his life because he is not anticipating all that God would have required of him. He just shows up unannounced, unexpected, unprepared. And so what happens is this friends. When we over parent our children it doesn't really work when they're little and it really doesn't work as they're older, they become socially and emotionally awkward. And rather than being innocent, knowing how to navigate the world, they're ignorant. They don't know what to do, which causes them to be emotionally and socially awkward. Now let me just say this. If you are one of those kids that grew up in a high control, sort of sheltered religious environment, okay, don't raise your hand. But the point here is not to get bitter against your parents. They loved you and they tried their best and maybe they made some mistakes, but to make it better that you learned from that and grow from that. My goal here is not to weaponize the scripture so that you could send this to your, 'cause some of you right now, you're like, I'm sending this to my parents. I'm gonna send this to my parents every day. No thank 'em for what they got right, forgive them for what they got wrong and see if rather than getting bitter, you can grow up and make things better. Now here's the good news in this.

God is still involved and God is involved here in a way that the theologians would call Providence. And that is that Providence is two things. God is sovereign. That means he's in authority, he's in control. He's in charge. He can do what he wants and no one and nothing can stop him 'cause he's got all power. But also not only is God just sovereign. He's good. Because if God was sovereign and he wasn't good, that's not good. If God is good, that means he uses his power to orchestrate events for our blessing. When I think of God's Providence, I think of the fatherhood of God, like in a household, a father is the sovereign. He's the highest authority and he's the strongest person in the family, but he also needs to be loving and present and selfless and humble and generous and good. So his strength is to bless and benefit everyone else, not just to selfishly serve himself. What we see here is God's Providence. This kid's just walking through the desert and he just happens to show up at where, oh well that's God's Providence and who shows up there? The guys who work for Laban his uncle and who shows up there? Rachel. See a lot of the time we're thinking, where will I meet my spouse? Where are they, where are they? And sometimes God just brings them along. You didn't do anything, you just live in your and there they are. Like I'll never forget, I was 17 years of age. I was in high school, saw this adorable blonde gal that I loved with all my heart. And then right in front of me in class, got assigned a seat to her best friend who grew up across the street. I was like, oh, tell me about herself. She's like, oh duh duh duh. I was like, who do you hang with? Oh, Grace is my friend. Oh thank you, Lord. Okay, so she introduced Grace and I. It's just God's Providence. Sometimes you're just at work, you're at the store. I've seen people meet on airplanes. Let me tell you this. If anything good happens on an airplane. It was the Providence of God, that's what it was. But I've seen people sit down and just, that's where they met. God's Providence is in your life. You don't need to worry as much about getting it all right. But just following his will and him getting you into the place that he wants you to be. So we moved from the well to the welcome to the wedding. Oh, think back on your wedding day, married people. Even if you had a bad wedding, it's better than this. Okay, here we go. Genesis 29:15-20, "Then Laban." This is the sneaky manipulative controlling uncle said to Jacob about. He's gonna make it seem all loving and generous, "Because you're my kinsman. Should you therefore serve me for nothing." He's been working for free for a month 'cause he doesn't know how to work a job or negotiate a deal. So he is getting taken advantage of. "Tell me what shall your wages be? Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah," she's 14 years older, still single. "And the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah's eyes were weak." She had some sort of physical problem. "Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance. Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, 'I will serve you seven years.'" Let me tell you this naive kid is not good at negotiating deals. He's not, I would've started with seven days and not saying she's not worth it, you gotta see where his threshold is. "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter, Rachel." Naive kid doesn't know how to negotiate. "Laban said, 'It is better that I give her to you than I give her to any other man so stay with me.' So Jacob served seven years for Rachel." This is the first job he's ever had. He's working for free, really hard for seven years. And this is one of the most beautiful, lovely, poetic lines in the Bible. "And they seemed to him but a few days because of the love that he had for her." Okay, here's the dad. Dad here is an awful, terrible human being. If you wanna name your, you're like I wanna name my kids after somebody in the Bible, don't just pick a name, look it up. Okay you're like I name my son Laban. Don't okay, Laban is a horrible

human being, he's despicable. And what he's got here. Let me say this. There's three kinds of people there's wise, foolish and evil. In this story is anyone wise? Nope. Laban is evil. Jacob is foolish. Guess what happens? Evil people hunt foolish people like prey. That's what they do. So Jacob's like, well how about we do seven years and I'll work for free. And I'll just trust you and give seven years of my life and do whatever you tell me to do. And you know why he's good at this? He's been trained by his mother to just do what he's told. Shots fired, shots fired. His whole life, he didn't make any decisions. His mom just told him what to do. Then his mom tells him, go to my brother. And then the brother says, well, that's fine. I'll just tell you what to do. That's all you've ever done. At some point to be a man, you've gotta make your own decisions. And he's not making any decisions. He is doing exactly what he's told. And what we see here is, well, Jacob does not pray for guidance. He doesn't. See previously when his dad was gonna find a wife, they prayed and they got wise counsel involved. He doesn't do that. He doesn't get anybody else involved and he doesn't even ask the Lord. He's just, he's like I got this. I know what I'm doing. No you don't. Just because you're older doesn't mean you're wiser. How many of you have met an old fool? Okay I mean, if not every four years we choose between them. I mean, I'm just telling you how this works. Okay. Obviously don't care. You can send in an email. We got a team standing by to delete it. I don't care. And here's the issue as well. Is he prepared to be a husband? No, because there was something called the bride price and the bride price is this. The kids grow up, they work for the family business. And if you're gonna marry one of the daughters, you're reducing the staff of the family business. So you would compensate for the loss. That's the bride price. The second point of the bride price is to prove that you actually can make money and take care of a family. I know it's a crazy idea. These old fashioned ways, you should get a job before you get a wife. Just write that down. That's just a good idea. All the ladies are like, yeah, all the guys are like, I'm gonna go to another church where they don't tell these things. And so what happens is he leaves home, but he's not ready. He's not worked his whole life. So he hasn't saved up anything. And his dad didn't send him with any financial support. Maybe it's because he was running for his life and time was short and or maybe his dad was just thinking, you know what? My son has gotta to figure out his own way. I'm tired of paying his bills and cleaning up his mess and he's gonna venture out on his own. If he wants to get married, he's gotta figure out a way to generate some revenue and feed his own family. Paul says it this way in the New Testament. If any man does not provide for the needs of his family, he's denied the faith and he's worse than an unbeliever. God puts a lot of responsibility on a man to generate revenue and income to feed a family. You don't have to be wealthy, but you do, if you're gonna have a wife, she's going to need to eat and live indoors, especially in Arizona. It's hot. See it is hot, it's hot in here too, right? I don't know why I wear a leather jacket. I mean, I gosh, I just, I feel like Mike Tyson at a spelling bee, I just am sweating all over myself. And when you have kids true or false, they're gonna need you to spend some money. Yeah, they are, they're expensive. They're expensive. And it's not a problem for a wife to work and make money. Proverbs 31 woman is good in real estate. That's all fine. But the point is this, this man has not yet learned how to take care of himself. So he is not ready to take care of a family. And so he's going to have to prove himself over some years. Now what he has here is a tremendous test. He wants to be with Rachel, he's like I wanna be with Rachel. But here's the deal, you gotta work for seven years. Let me tell this to all the single men between you and your marriage is an

obstacle, between you and your wedding day is always some obstacle. You can use it as an excuse to not love and pursue that woman. Or you could use it as a test to prove that you do love that woman. I tell this to the single man all the time. Every guy's like I met a girl. I think she's the one I love her with all my heart. I'm just telling you a test is coming, an obstacle is looming. Something will be happening and you're gonna have to push through that. You're gonna have to overcome that to get to a happily married couple. For Grace and I, we met at 17, got saved at 19, I did. And we got married at 21, between our junior and senior year of college. The big obstacle was we're broke. Like we're in college and broke. So I took a job a couple years before we got married. I lied about my age. I was, it wasn't right. But I did it. And I joined longshoreman's union. So I'm a longshoreman 'cause it paid well. And then I took a job on a boat and I would work two shifts. I would work from like, I think it was like five o'clock to like at night to like one o'clock in the morning. And then one o'clock in the morning to nine o'clock in the morning. So I worked 16 hour night shift. And then I slept in my truck by the docks. I was a dock hand so that I could marry Grace. People are like, why are you working 16 hours? Because between me and Grace being married is me saving some money so that we can finish up college. So you know what I'll work 16 hours at night, sleep in my truck 'cause the finish line is I get to be with Grace. And so here he does love her and he is pushing through the obstacle and barrier to be with her. But so we've moved from the well to the welcome to the wedding. Here's the wild honeymoon. And it's not what you're thinking. It's not what you're thinking. It's not like, oh I've seen these on YouTube at Vegas. No, it's not like that. Genesis 29:21-30. "Then Jacob said the Laban, 'Give me my wife.'" He's still a little socially awkward, "That I may go in to her." I will just submit to you do not say that to your father-in-law. Otherwise you will be cashing in your full dental insurance and deductible. That's my wife I'm gonna go in to her. Oh, oh wow okay. I'm now doing prison ministry from the inside, okay. "For my time is completed." I've put in my seven years. "So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast." They're gonna have a wedding. Okay but, "In the evening he took his daughter Leah." This is nefarious gal in the front row just gasped. Here we go. "Leah brought her to Jacob and he went," you read it not me, naughty. Okay, "Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter, Leah, to be her servant. And in the morning," the dude, what the dude marries one gal wakes up with another, it's a bad day. Amen. How many of you guys you're like, I love my wife and I don't wanna marry your sister. Every man. "In the morning behold, it was Leah." He rolls over he's like, ah, I'm in a "Scooby Doo" episode. "And Jacob said to Laban, 'What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why have you, what deceived me?'" What's his name mean? Deceiver. Why is he running for his life? He deceived his brother. What just happened? He got deceived. Oh, oh. "Laban said, 'It is not so done in our country.'" He's gonna pull out the fine print. You know, we have standards here. You know, we have standards, let me share the, "To give the younger before the first born." Wouldn't it have been nice to have this conversation seven years ago. Maybe then we could get Leah hooked up with a friend. You know, something like that. "Complete the week of this one, seven more years. And I'll give you the other one also in return for serving me another 14 years." He's got a 14 year sentence. "Jacob did so and completed a week." And they're referring to the seven years as a week. "Then Laban gave him his daughter, Rachel, to be his wife. Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter, Rachel, to be her servant. So Jacob went in to Rachel also." Covenant is

now consummated. And he what? "Loved Rachel more than Leah." That's devastating, "And served Laban for another seven years." So, okay let me explain, how many of you, this is not what you're expecting. You're like, I think we're gonna get a motivational talk. It's gonna be real, oh, I threw up in my mouth. You weren't expecting this. But what I love about the Bible, it's the most honest book ever written. And how many of us our family's got some stuff. You're just like, it's crazy. Like every one of us has got some stuff in our family. You're like, that was insane. And God's honest about it. 'Cause if God can work through this family, God can work through your family so there is hope. But the principle here is this. It says in Galatians 6:7, in the New Testament, "Do not be deceived. God is not mocked, whatever you so you're gonna reap." He is a trickster. He's a con man. He conned his brother out of his birthright. He conned his brother out of his blessing. Where did he learn how to manipulate and control, connive and trick from his mom. So then he is running for his life. 'Cause he finally gets caught by his bulky ginger brother who wants to kill him. She says, go to my brother's house. He goes to the brother's house. Guess where his mom learned how to manipulate and control from her family. So now he's actually going from one person who controls and manipulates him to another one. The only difference is his mom loved him. And now Laban uses him. Let me say this. Sometimes when you got a problem, you shouldn't run to your family, they're the problem. Oh, felt so good to get that off my chest. But that, he's gonna go from a problem to a bigger problem because ultimately it's a family problem, but now he is true or false reaping what he sowed. He can't look at Laban to be like, it's a horrible thing to trick family members. He's like, oh let's talking to your brother. You're junior varsity, that's why you're frustrated. Uncle Laban's varsity just took you to school son. And here, what we see is God forgives us for our sin. But sometimes there's still consequences and you need to know this. A lot of people are like, well I get to do whatever I want. God forgives me. He does, but there's still consequences. Like if you blow all your money, God can forgive you, but you're still broke. You're still broke. If you're really mean to your kids and they grow up and don't want a relationship with you, God can forgive you, but you still don't have a relationship with your kids. There's a consequence. Here, he's been a lying covert, secret, manipulative, abusive, selfish control freak. And now he's met somebody bigger and better than him. This is gonna be a painful season, 14 years of this. So let me pull out a few lessons. Number one, when you get married, your priorities must change. So prior to this, so let's take this gal Rachel, her first priority should have been, what her relationship with God. And then before her husband comes along, her first priority is to her family, her dad, her sister, once, we don't know anything about her mom, Grace brought that up. Grace is like, where's her mom? I don't know. Maybe making drinks. I don't know what she's doing. She just, she's having a, this is a crazy family, but this is the fam I don't either the wife is gone or this is the husband who doesn't even involve his wife. Doesn't consult her. And he's just off on his own. He's just a total meat head, I don't know. Now once her husband comes along and they're gonna get married, her priorities should be her relationship with God. And then her relationship with her husband. And instead her loyalty is to her dad and her sister. And she uses and abuses her soon to be supposed husband. Here's the big idea. Once you get married, your priorities change. And not only do the children need to accept that. So do the parents. Is she doing what's best for her husband and her new family? Obviously not. So I've got two daughters, three sons, two daughters, one is married, one is single. Now before my oldest daughter was married. It was her

relationship with God. And then her relationship with her mommy and I and her siblings, her family. Guess what happened when she got married? I went down the priority list. I did, voluntarily because I was the first man in her life. Now, I'm not. Now, I'm not. Her husband is, that's her first priority. And so my hope and prayer and goal is to help them have a awesome marriage and a great friendship. I'm first in line, I want him to succeed and I don't want to get in the middle. I don't want her to wake up and think, oh my husband or my dad. No, no, no, no, no. It's very clear God, husband. And then dad should be encouraging married daughter, healthy relationship with her husband and with her Lord. I loved every minute of being in first position. When she was growing up, I loved it. I'd be like, hey, do you wanna go on a date? She's like, I do, me too. We go on daddy dates. We go to breakfast. We go out to tea. Now I don't do a lot of date nights with my daughter. You know her husband's got that. We get lunch together, I love her with all my heart. But the big idea is this. Once you get married, your priorities must change. Not only do the adult children, but so do the parents need to accept that. And her dad's like, okay, here's what I want. Here's what your sister wants. She'll be like, okay, no, you and your husband need to talk and pray about this. Go ask your husband if he'd also like to marry your sister. Answer no, we're not even gonna pray about it. We've already got our answer. In addition, some families are covert and controlling. Covert families are controlling families. Does Jacob have any idea what is going on? No. For how long? Seven years. They are covert and controlling. And the problem with covert and controlling people. You can never trust them because you never know, honestly, what is happening. If you have family members, you're like, they don't tell us anything, but they've always got something in the works and it always is they win and we lose, that's covert and controlling. And that's a destructive and deadly family system. They are not only hurting Jacob. He's hurting the father is both his daughters. I mean, just think about this. He, Jacob loves Rachel. He marries the sister, didn't want to. Now for seven years, Rachel's gotta watch her husband with her sister. Do you think Christmas is weird? Do you think Thanksgiving is awkward? Do you think maybe at Thanksgiving, nobody gets a knife. I mean, it's just awkward. And they're doing what? Living and sleeping together. See Laban here is a covert and controlling father. But let me say this as well. The sisters are not victims, they're co-conspirators. Okay let me, so I picked on the men because we believe in equality at some point, then we pick on the women. So we're there. So ladies, do you think this could have been pulled off without Rachel's involvement? She got dressed up. She put on her maybe white dress, doors of the church open. I don't know what it's like in the old days, goes down the aisle. Dad's walking her down the aisle. I mean, this is just sickness, who gives this woman. I do, for 20 minutes and then I'm taking her back. I mean, it's just this covert family system. They get married. They go to consummate their covenant. Do you think there's any way that this whole ruse was pulled off without both sisters being involved? There's no way. Even if Rachel was late to the honeymoon. He wakes up in the morning. He rolls he's like ah! That means Rachel never showed up. Now the commentators tried to figure it out. They're like, how could he not know? Well, we've already established he's not the brightest. Okay we've established that. He's not 100 watt bulb, this kid, he's just not. And some would say, well, she's wearing a veil. I was like, but she has a eye thing. Seems like you'd still figure this out. So anyways, and then the question is some are like, well maybe it was dark. It'd have to be like real dark. And you know what? I would go candle on this and just double check what I'm getting into. Gotta be careful what I say. So for

the first time in 26 years, so. And some commentators think that maybe he had a few drinks. Maybe a few too many. I've never seen it. I've never seen more alcohol equal more discernment. There is this scale, more alcohol, less discernment. That's always the scale. But these gals, they are not victims. They're co-conspirators. There's a law that gets established later in Leviticus 18:18 says, "When your wife is living. Do not marry her sister and have sexual relations with her for they would be rivals." It's kind of like, hey, don't do this. And this is what happens. We live in a stupid culture, you notice that. And by stupid, I mean stupid. And Jesus says, don't say something stupid, unless it's stupid. Our culture's stupid. And our culture's at the place where it's considering polygamy and polyamory and polyandry and open marriages and it always ends really bad. And sometimes there's Christians in quotes that come along, it's in the Bible, so is murder. That doesn't mean we're supposed to do it. I mean, this is a bad thing. And now our culture's like, well, let's try it and see what happens. And the Bible's like we already did and it didn't go well. Sometimes my wife said, that's right. So yes, I agree with that. And so should the daughter here, Rachel, should she have defied her father's commands and authority? Yes. Because authority is derived from God. There is no just authority, authority is derived from God. And as soon as you're telling someone to do what God tells them not to do, they should disobey your authority in obedience to his authority. And what's happening here, the dad is literally telling the daughters, all right, we're gonna play this sucker for seven years. And then we're gonna swap out at the honeymoon and then we're gonna play this sucker for another seven more years. The girls should have said, no, dad, no dad. That's a sin against God. And that's abusive toward this guy. How many of you young men see this as abusive? He loved her so much after seven years, you know what he could have done. He could have just walked away, said you people are crazy. Take your crazy daughter back, I'm done. What he says is I love her so much. I'll do it for seven more years. You think you got a bad boss? You think you got a crummy job? You think you got a raw deal? This is the worst of all time. Every day for seven years he goes back to work 'cause he loves his girl that much. Let me say this to the parents of daughters. It is better for your daughter to be single than married to a man who does not love her. True or false? True. And sometimes, and the Bible's pro marriage. We're pro marriage, but sometimes if you're in the church, you're a Christian. There's so much pressure. Especially on the like, well, who are you dating? Where's your boyfriend? Are you guys engaged, are you guys gonna get married? You know, how many kids are you gonna have? And it's just like, wait a minute. It's too much pressure. It's easy to get married. It's hard to have a healthy marriage. Because marriage isn't a finish line. It's a starting line. You haven't done anything when you get married, that's where you start. I've got two daughters as I said, I wanna honor my son-in-law. This is the downside of being related to me. You end up as an illustration without permission, but there are other downsides as well, but this is one of them. But my son-in-law loves my daughter, loves my daughter. And I would rather her be single than married to someone who didn't love her. The goal is not to get your daughter married, but your daughter to be loved by someone who cherishes her and adores her and serves her and blesses her. That's the goal. And so the dad here, he's pushing, but what he's pushing for is not in the best interest of his daughter. But here's the good news. The good news is God is so good that he can use bad for good. Again, we're back to God's Providence and his goodness and his sovereignty. There's a line in Hebrews 12 that says that when hard, painful, I'm summarizing, difficult

circumstances happen in our life. God isn't angry and punishing us. He's a father who is disciplining us through hardship. To be a disciple requires discipline. You can't be a disciple unless you are disciplined. Character, fortitude, courage, responsibility is oftentimes hammered out on the anvil of adversity. Now for the first many decades of his life, his mom made sure he never had a hard day. And now he's gonna have 14 years of very hard days, but God is gonna use that to discipline him, to build character so that he's ready to become a good husband, a good father, not perfect through him will come the nation of Israel through the nation of Israel will come Jesus Christ, the forgiver of sins and the savior of humanity. He's not ready for that kinda load. He's gotta strengthen himself a bit and God's gonna use adversity to do so. So because I know you really want to talk about this. Let's talk about signs of a controlling parent. Shall we? True or false, Laban is a case study in a controlling parent. Absolutely. Rebecca was a case study in a controlling parent. Okay here's a little list. 10 signs of controlling parents of adult children. Number one, interfering in everything. Doesn't matter how old you are, what you're doing. They're like, well, you didn't run that by me. You didn't tell me, you didn't ask me, that's, hey, I think that's a good idea. How's your sex life? How much money you guys make? You're like, hey, there's a difference between secrecy and privacy. Once you're an adult, privacy is it's none of your business unless we choose to tell you. Use of manipulation tactics, this can be money. Well, I'm gonna give you money, but you gotta do it with it what I tell you to do. This can be guilt. We loved you, we tried so hard, we sacrificed everything. You don't even care. You've made your mom depressed and sometimes guilt. Well the other kids don't have a problem. I did this for my parents. What's wrong with you? Conditional love, you do what they say. Yay, blessing. You don't do what they say. Nay, cursing. Let me tell you this, conditional love is not love. It's not, it's not. This is if, if I win and you lose, I'm gonna be good to you. If I don't get what I want, I'm gonna hurt you. And I'm gonna make you feel guilty for being abused. Demanding obedience, not out of relationship, love, self-interest. It is harsh control demanding. And what happened? I mean, I literally had one of the weirdest counseling sessions I ever had, there was a dude who was like in his 50s and his parents were in their 70s and they called me in for counseling. I was like, in my 20s I'm like, what am I here? And literally the parents pulled out the, you need to obey your mother and father. I was like, that verse is for little kids. This guy's collecting social security. He's officially launched. Golly. Harsh punishment that do not align with the offense because the point is this, it's not about helping you learn and grow. It's about controlling you. So if you say or do anything that they don't agree with, the hammer is going to drop very quickly to get you back in line. Lack of empathy and respect. You know you've got this with an adult child and a parent. When the parent says, well, how do you think this makes me feel? Do you understand what this does to me? Well, what do you think I want? I mean, what do you think I need? How do you think others look at me now? And it's always about the parent. Let me say this, when your kids grow up, if you're a parent, it's not about you. You're never asking, well, what was it like to be my kid? What is it like to be my kid? Lack of appreciation for individuality, well in our family, this is how we do it, get in line. This is how our family's always done it. You know, you gotta look like this. You gotta act like that. You gotta do this, you gotta do that. Sometimes even in a religious home, it's not just, you gotta go to church. You gotta go to this denomination. You gotta go to that church. You gotta go to our church. No appreciation, no individuality. 'Cause they can't distinguish between individuality and rebellion.

There's a big difference between you being who God made you to be and you rebelling, but they can't tell the difference. Eliminating or providing little privacy. Hey, can we have a key to your house? Hey, we need to have access to your banking app. Hey, we need to know what's going on. What's your schedule, what's your budget? How's your sex life, what's going on? We need to know, you guys didn't tell us. It's like, well it's 'cause we're not married to you. Criticizing or having unsolicited opinions about independent choices. Adult children get to make decisions. And if you love them and have wisdom and build relationship with them, they may ask your opinion and they may, they may not. And what happens is if you're not involved in the decision making process, then the over controlling parent comes and they're like, well, you didn't ask me. I didn't even get to speak into this. I didn't get to talk. Hey what about me, or I disagree. You gotta change that decision. You gotta do what I tell. It's like I'm not six. And unattainable or perfectionistic standards. It's this works relationship. You're just like it's exhausting. So, okay. You just feel it in the room. I mean you're welcome. You're all blessed to be here. I can just feel that. So what happens is there's only three kinds of relationships, healthy, unhealthy, and no relationship. Those are three options. If you have a domineering, overbearing high controlling parent, can you have a healthy relationship? No, 'cause a healthy relationship takes two people working on a healthy relationship. If that's not what they're working on, you can't have a healthy relationship with an unhealthy person. So you now you got two options, unhealthy relationship, no relationship. Okay. Now if you're the parent, I've got again five kids and I'm not saying I've done this right. Somebody like how's he have such insight? Through all of his errors that's how he has insight. Nobody raises five kids wakes up, looks in the mirror is like nailed it. No one who's sober or even drives by reality can come to that conclusion. But if we are a parent, it's gotta be going to the adult child and saying, I wanna have a healthy relationship. So first and foremost, what are the things that I've said or done that were not healthy and helpful? And don't get defensive. Defensive is not a fruit of the spirit. It's not love, joy, defensive, controlling, manipulating. It's not in there. And as a parent you could always go, well, I was stressed to work on a lot going on, there's a lot going on. Don't just, you know what, you're right. I accept that as truth and reality. So let me apologize for the things that were unhealthy. And let me ask you going forward. How can we have a healthy relationship? And let me say this parents don't need need to be perfect, but it's really helpful to their children when the parents are the one who say that they weren't perfect. If you go to your kid and you want a healthy relationship, you're giving them an option. If you're unhealthy, you don't give them an option. What happens then is most people that have an unhealthy adult relationship with a parent, they have an unhealthy relationship as long as they possibly can. Then you add kids, more obligations, more duties, more jacked up relationships, more trauma and drama. Then the extended family gets involved. 'Cause here what happened is they've got a bad broken marriage and family. So then they tap in the extended family. All they do is just add more clowns to the clown car. That's all they do. And the circus just gets louder. And at some point then the adult children come to the conclusion. We can't have healthy. We can no longer tolerate unhealthy. You've given us no choice, but no relationship. There's a whole book called "Boundaries" and everybody bought it and bought a second copy for their parents. I mean, that's just where we are. And it's like, you know what? We're moving, you're not gonna get our, we're moving to another state. You cannot have a key to our house, we changed the locks. No we're not going on vacation together. We changed our

cell phone number and the parents are like, it seems like you're ignoring me. 100% exactly what we're trying to do is get some distance. Because once you grow up and become an adult and you get married, you have your family, they have their family, their family no longer gets to control your family. You've got to love each other and figure it out. How do we have two families that work together in a healthy way. And what you're gonna see, spoiler alert. I mean, for both of you that come back, it's gonna be life changing, but they have an unhealthy relationship for 14 years. Eventually what happens? No relationship, they're done. This family it's like, we're done. We're done. So let me share this briefly. This is kind of how I view it as a dad. And the point is this parenting changes as the child matures. I see this as six stages of maturity. When you're a baby, you don't make any decisions and you don't make any provisions. You don't provide anything. You don't decide anything. When you're a child, you don't make any provisions. You're not generating revenue, but you do have some decisions. When I go to bed, am I gonna stay asleep? Or am I gonna sneak up on my iPad? Am I gonna go to class and pay attention or ignore the teacher? You have some decisions to make, what am I gonna do at recess, who are my friends? You also have some responsibilities. Hey, put your dish in the sink, go get your pajamas on. Brush your teeth. You now have some responsibilities. Adolescent is where you make more decisions. You get to pick your friends, get to go to school, play sports, join the band. Be away from your parents. You got a little autonomy independence. And also you start to make provision. Maybe you get your first job or internship. You start generating a little revenue. You're not fully independent, but you're not fully dependent. You're making that transition. Young adult, it shifts to where you're making most of your provision and most of your decisions. This is like a college student. You're like, I'm working full-time or part-time I'm going to school. I am generating revenue. I'm making my own decisions. I get myself up in the morning. I get myself to class, I take my own test, but my parents are still involved and they still help me financially 'cause I'm in that transition. You know you're a full adult when you make all of your own decisions and provisions, I pay all my own bills. I've left my mom and dad's payroll and I make all my own decisions. I decide where I work, where I go to church. What I'm gonna do, what I'm gonna do with my money. Now I might ask my parents for wise counsel, if they're godly and available. But I take care of myself. A mature adult, hear me in this. Not only makes decisions and provisions for themselves, but for others. So at age 26, I was a senior pastor married and at age 27, we had our first kid and now I'm responsible for my wife, our kid and our church family, like I've got, I can't just say, well, take care of myself. I got other people to take care of. A mature adult doesn't just make their own provisions and decisions they provide for others and make decisions for others. This is where you become a parent or a grandparent, or maybe you become a pastor, a ministry leader. Maybe you open a company. Here's the big problem for those of you who are younger during COVID we shoved everybody back one to three life stages. We just took a whole couple. We took a whole generation was like back, everybody, move home. Everybody get money from the government. Be dependent, don't make any decisions. The government will make all the decisions and make all the provisions. Now we have a totally dependent, lazy, immature generation that is also complaining, but not maturing. True. All the dads said amen. All their kids are like, I don't know. I wasn't paying attention. I was on my phone ordering weed. So we've got a whole generation that we've shoved back to complete dependence, and they're further away than they should be at their age to take on adult

responsibilities. The good news is this. If you will walk in God's will for you, you will have a massive head start. A massive head start. This is what I tell my sons. Like if you're sober, awake with a belt on going to work, you're 10 to 15 years ahead. And so this becomes for God's people a tremendous opportunity and parenting is what? What stage or phase of maturity is the child at? How do I help them get to the next one? The goal is they make their own decisions and provisions, and they're ready to take on the next generation. 'Cause at some point I'm not gonna be there, but my kids and grandkids will. And if it only works when I'm there, I failed them because it needs to work when I'm no longer there. So I have more notes. Maybe we'll get into 'em next week. Let me just close with this two things. Number one, raising a child and then raising a parent. Let me just think out loud, raising a child is this true or false children always want more freedom. Always. And so what I always tell my kids is this. If you want more freedom, prove to me more responsibility. If you're responsible, I can give you more freedom. If you're totally irresponsible, I can't give you freedom. You're gonna hurt yourself. So some of your children are here. They're like I want more freedom then be more mature. Be more responsible. Be more mature, be more responsible. 'Cause the stupid thing we do in our culture at a certain age, we just assume you're ready for certain responsibilities. Oh you're 18 now you can, you can vote. Don't, you don't know what you're doing. Look at who you voted for. Come on, I mean you're not helping. And at 21 it's like, well you can have alcohol. Well, if you're not mature and responsible and ready, that ain't gonna help. You just need to stick with water for the next decade. You can't even move up to caffeine. We can't trust you with that. If you want more freedom, that's what I always told my kids be more responsible. 'Cause my goal, I wanna give you freedom, but not freedom that'll destroy you. So you need to be ready to handle it. Number two, I'll close with this maybe. You and I are not just their parents, we're His child. And what happens when we parent our kids, the father is parenting us. How many of us you're like, man, I feel like I'm learning more than the kids. I feel like I'm growing more than the kids. I have to spank myself more than the kids, it's just, and so for those of us who are parents, it is an opportunity for us to be the father's disciples and to undergo some disciplines. So what God is doing when we're raising our kids, he's not just causing us to help them grow up. He's using them to help us grow up. They're part of the sanctification too in our own life. And I love you so here's what I want you to do. I want you to spend some time meeting with a father. What, from your family of origins, you're like that needs to change. Or that was a real blessing. I need to say thank you to my mom and dad. If you're a parent raising your kids, I don't want you to get bitter against your parents, but I want you to make it better as you parent. And we're gonna spend some time just worshiping God and meeting with God and what's really sad in this situation. I just think about it. Did anyone stop and pray and worship God and ask him his opinion in the whole story of Genesis 29? Nobody in 14 years, 14 years. They're like we got this. You don't. They didn't stop and say, okay God, what do you want? You're our father, tell your kids what your will is. This is a chance for us to meet with God as his kids, to worship him, to pray, to listen, to have him parent us so we can mature. And then if, and when we're ready, help us get married. And if, and when we're ready, help us parent our own kids. Father, thank you for being a perfect and loving and good and gracious and generous father and God, as we read the story of this crazy family and God truthfully just reminds us all that we all come from a crazy family. We've all got stories that we could tell that are just bizarre. And God, some of us, we come from

families that are a lot like this one, generations of brokenness, control, over parenting, manipulation, guilt. I just think of the scriptures where it says, if the sun sets you free, you're free indeed. Father, thank you that you adopt us into your family, that you are our father, that you parent us perfectly. That our big brother Jesus doesn't attack us. But instead he sets us free. I pray for the lives and legacies of these families. Thanks for some time together. Thank you that we can take you seriously, but not ourselves. And God would you just say whatever you have to say to all of your children right now so that they can have a good future that is blessed in Jesus' good name. Amen.