

MODULE 3 — LEAVE AND CLEAVE

Building Boundaries Between Families Worksheet

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete this worksheet individually, then discuss your answers with your spouse. Be honest about what you have observed, not what you wish were true.

1. LEAVING HOME PATTERNS

When did your spouse leave home? Was it a natural, healthy separation, or was there reluctance or guilt?

Does your spouse still act like they need permission or approval for adult decisions?

How does your spouse handle decisions without consulting parents first?

2. DEPENDENCE & INDEPENDENCE

Is your spouse financially independent from their parents, or do they still rely on parental support?

Does your spouse make major decisions independently, or do they defer to parental preferences?

Can your spouse set boundaries with parents without guilt or fear?

3. LOYALTY CONFLICTS

When your spouse must choose between you and their parents, who typically wins?

Does your spouse prioritize your marriage as the primary relationship, or do parents still hold that position?

How does your spouse respond if you express concerns about parental involvement?

4. EMOTIONAL SEPARATION

Is your spouse emotionally separate from their parents, or do they carry their parents' moods and stress?

Does your spouse feel responsible for managing their parents' emotions or happiness?

Can your spouse disagree with parents and move forward without lingering guilt or shame?

5. YOUR MARRIAGE AS PRIMARY

Does your spouse treat your marriage as the primary relationship that needs protection?

Would your spouse keep family secrets from you to protect parents?

Does your spouse introduce boundaries with parents to protect your marriage, or do they resist?

KEY REFLECTION: How clear are the boundaries between your marriage and your spouse's family of origin?

Where do you see the need for stronger boundaries, and how comfortable is your spouse with establishing them?