

# BOUNDARIES: GROWING HEART

Gleanings and Extracts from  
Cloud and Townsend's "Boundaries";  
"Boundaries in Marriage"

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*(Pro 4:23) Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

Issues to be truth-telling, responsible, free and loving God and people.

*(Pro 4:23) Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

It is when to say Yes  
and how to say No,  
to take control of my life.

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**(1) The concept of boundaries comes from the very nature of God.**

- A. God is the distinct Person, separate from us and creation.
- B. The Trinity are distinct persons with their own boundaries.
- C. He sets limits what He allows into His presence. He confronts sin and allows consequences. He guards His House and He does not allow evil to go in.

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**(2) Spiritual boundaries like those that are physical, define that I am the owner of my life and my responsibilities.**

- A. They define what is me and what is not me.  
*(Pro 14:10) The heart knows his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*
- B. I am responsible to others and for myself.  
*(Gal 6:2) Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*  
*(Gal 6:5) For every man shall bear his own burden (daily toil).*

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**(2) Spiritual boundaries like those that are physical, define that I am the owner of my life and my responsibilities.**

Self-control over my body,  
Feelings of compassion,  
thoughts (love God with my mind)  
beliefs (commands of God),  
behaviour  
and resources.

**DEVELOPMENT**

(1) BONDING – THE FOUNDATION *(continued)*

- D. The first task of a baby is to bond with parents for emotional object constancy as being rooted in love (Eph, 3:17; Col. 2:7).
- E. He is building a good foundation to withstand the separateness and conflict.
- F. He has no sense of self apart from the mother – mommy and I are the same.

**DEVELOPMENT**

(1). BONDING – THE FOUNDATION

- A. Boundaries are set from supportive relationships with God and others.
- B. The very nature of God is to be in relationship for God is love (1 John 4:16).
- C. Like God, our central need is to be connected and safe.  
(Gen 2:18) *And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*

**DEVELOPMENT**

(2) SEPARATION AND INDIVIDUATION – THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SOUL

- A. As a baby gains a sense of internal security, he searches for independence.
- B. Separation, a “not me” experience; Individuation, a “me” experience (Luke 2:49).
- C. How we approach boundaries will impact character, values and choices.  
(Luk 2:49) *And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?*

## DEVELOPMENT

### (3) THREE PHASES

#### A. HATCHING – differentiation, “not the same”

1. Bonding still foundational for closeness and security
2. Do not use withdrawal as weapon.
3. The baby is safe to explore and stretch but still leans on mom.

## DEVELOPMENT

### B. PRACTICING – separation, individuation, *(continued)*

4. Discipline is an external boundary, designed to develop internal boundaries.

#### a) Positive aspects are proactivity, prevention and instruction.

*(Eph 6:4) And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

## DEVELOPMENT

### (3) THREE PHASES (continued)

#### B. PRACTICING – separation, individuation, “I can do anything.”

1. Trying to leave and to be self.
2. Sense of omnipotence, exhilaration and energy.
3. Learning some impulse control, limits for inner restraint and responsibility.

*(Job 11:7) Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?*

## DEVELOPMENT

4. Discipline is an external boundary, designed to develop internal boundaries. *(continued)*

#### b) Negatives are correction, chastisement and consequences.

#### c) The freedom of the Cross allows us to practice and fail without having to pay a terrible price of loss of relationships (1 Peter 2:24; Rom. 8:1).

*(Pro 15:10) Correction is grievous unto him that forsakes the way: and he that hates reproof shall die.*

## DEVELOPMENT

(4) RAPPROCHEMENT – restoring harmonious relation, “I can’t do everything”

- A. Return to connection but with more separate self.
- B. Tool of Anger – distinguish between self and others to be managed.

Allow them to express anger, grief or loss without trying to cheer them up and talk them out of their feelings.

*(Pro 14:10) The heart knows his own bitterness; and a stranger does not intermeddle with his joy.*

## DEVELOPMENT

(4) RAPPROCHEMENT (*continued*)

D. Tool of saying “no” to self and others, power of control and choice.

1. Teach the skills of delay of gratification to our impulses and desires for some later gain (Prov. 6:6- 11). Safe-suffering to experience consequences.
2. Provide safe environment to say no, without fear of loss of love.
3. Take no from others without withdrawal. We take responsibility for ourselves instead of relying on others. Respect for others is the basis for empathy just as we would like to be loved.

## DEVELOPMENT

(4) RAPPROCHEMENT (*continued*)

C. Tool of ownership – stewardship of “mine” to be developed.

1. Identify and verbalize our own needs and initiate.
2. The sense of “my life is up to me” is founded in God’s concern that we take responsibility for our own lives (Matt. 25:14-30).

*(Mat 25:21) His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

(1) LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING

- A. Do not reap consequences of others
- B. Consequences need to be suffered before changes happen.

(2) LAW OF RESPONSIBILITY

- A. I am responsible for my own growth.
- B. In helping others, I must set limits on sins.

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (3) LAW OF POWER

- A. Power belongs to God.
- B. I have the ability to confess and ask for help.

### (4) LAW OF RESPECT

- A. I need to treat others as I want to be treated.
- 2. I give and respect others the freedom.
- 3. I feel better about my freedom.

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (6) LAW OF EVALUATION

- A. We need to evaluate the pain caused by making choices, empathize with it and be responsible to the other person.
- B. This does not mean that we should not set boundaries because someone responds with hurt or anger.  
(Eph 4:25) *Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.*
- C. As iron sharpens iron, we need feedback to grow (Prov. 27:17).  
(Pro 27:17) *Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (5) LAW OF MOTIVATION

- A. We enjoy and thank God for the freedom.
- B. We choose to serve in gratitude and love.
- C. No fear of abandonment or retaliation. d. Healthy boundaries are created to guard.

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (6) LAW OF EVALUATION (continued)

- D. We sometimes confuse two very different ideas: pain and injury. The spouse feels no pain when she overspends. Yet the marriage is being injured. Limits must be set and she may feel some pain and has to deal with the causes such as loss, failure and stress. Pain can be an opportunity for growth.  
(Psa 119:67) *Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept Thy word.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (7) LAW OF PRO-ACTIVITY

- A. Reaction phases are necessary but not sufficient for setting boundaries.
- B. Finding the boundaries, use the freedom to love others.  
(Gal 5:13) *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*  
(Gal 5:15) *But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (7) LAW OF PRO-ACTIVITY (continued)

- E. She explodes after some time at his meanness, which is her “victim” role. She should have sat him down: “You have a mean side and it makes me distance from you. I love you but I will not be mistreated that way. Let us work together on this that it does not happen again.”  
(Gal 6:1) *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (7) LAW OF PRO-ACTIVITY (continued)

- C. Proactive people show what they love, what they need and what they purpose.
- D. The ultimate expression of power is love; it is the ability not to express power but to restrain it with love and mutual respect.  
(Mat 5:38,39) *Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (7) LAW OF ENVY

- A. Envious hearts are spoken strongly against (James 4:2; Isa. 14:14, like most High).
- B. Envy defines “good” as “I do not possess” and hates the good it has.
- C. It keeps us always insatiable and dissatisfied; empty and unfulfilled.  
(Jas 4:2) *Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (7) LAW OF ENVY *(continued)*

- D. Envy focuses outside the boundaries, onto other, thus neglecting our responsibilities, leading to emptiness (Gal. 6:4).
- E. Envy should always be a sign that you are lacking something.
- F. Ask God to understand what you resent and why. Ask God to show what you need to do or give up the desire.  
(Gal 6:4) *But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (8) LAW OF ACTIVITY

- A. We need initiative (assertive and active) the God-given ability to propel into life.
- B. Wicked and lazy servant did not do his part (Matt. 25:14-30).
- C. Failing to try, passivity, will damage the soul.  
(Heb 10:38,39) *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (7) LAW OF ENVY *(continued)*

- G. Promotion comes from the Lord (Ps. 75:6) who gives riches, honor and life to the humble (Proverb 22:4) with no sorrow (Prov. 10:22). Learn to be content (Phil. 4:11).  
(Php 4:11) *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (9) LAW OF ACTIVITY *(continued)*

- D. Doing nothing or being passive stunts boundary development and growth in marriage. That is why friends and families stage interventions for alcoholics or gamblers in denial. Active ones make lots of mistakes and grow from them (Heb. 5:14). When both are involved, speaking truth in love, solving problems and setting goals, they will both grow.  
(Heb 5:14) *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (10) LAW OF EXPOSURE

- A. We exist in relationship with God and others and thus boundaries define us in relation to others,
- B. Boundaries then must be made known and communicated in relationships.
- C. Fears can be solved in relationships because that is the context of the problems.

(Ephesians 4:25) *Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (11) LAW OF EXPOSURE (*continued*)

He withdraws because her self-centeredness hurts. He needs sympathy for the hard work. Her response had been: "Do you think I have it easy with the kids?" He needs to expose to her the need for understanding and connection.

(Eph 5:13) *But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.*

(Eph 5:14) *Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

## LAWS OF BOUNDARIES

### (11) LAW OF EXPOSURE (*continued*)

- D. Secret and unexpressed boundaries will cause pain and resentment.
- E. The biblical mandate is to be honest and be in the light.
- F. Our boundaries are affected by sin and need to be brought into the light for God to heal them and for others to benefit them (1 John 1:9; James 4:16).

(Ephesians 5:13,14) *But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

## REFLECTIONS

- (1) Which of the three phases would be difficult for you: Hatching, Practicing, Rapprochement? How would you manage it?
- (2) Which of the laws do you struggle with? How would you deal with it?



## BOUNDARIES AND MARRIAGE

### (1) SOME REASONS FOR MARRIAGE:

- A. Rebellion
- B. Escape
- C. Loneliness
- D. Physical Appearance
- E. Social Pressure
- F. Guilt and Pity
- G. Rebound
- H. Pregnancy
- I. Romantic Love (Excitement, thrills and palpitations of heart).

*(Gen 2:24) Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*

## BOUNDARIES AND MARRIAGE

### (3) WHAT MARRIAGE IS!

- A. God created human sexuality, male and female, for companionship (Gen. 2:18), for meeting needs (help-meet), for another to feel a part and closely united to (Eph. 5:31), for love (Eph. 5:25) and for perpetuation of race (Gen. 1:28).
- B. Marriage is an unconditional covenant reflecting God's covenant of love, forgiveness and grace, each party to discover, equip and nurture and to fulfill gifts and responsibilities both in and outside marriage.
- C. Marriage is a discipleship, a total commitment of two imperfect people to the Person of Jesus Christ and to each other, giving protection, direction and correction and allowing God to break, make and mold and use each and together for His glory, the building up of saints and the salvation of souls.

## BOUNDARIES AND MARRIAGE

### (2) WHAT MARRIAGE IS NOT!

- A. Not a matter of blind love but deliberate choice.
  - 1. Romantic love is a feeling I feel when I feel that I am going to have a feeling that I have never felt before.
  - 2. Real love means an unconditional commitment to an imperfect person to another imperfect person.
- B. Not just a social or civil contract but a solemn, total and irrevocable Covenant (Mal. 2:14; Prov. 2:17; Matt. 19:5,6).
- C. Symptoms of creeping contractuality.
  - 1. Am I getting what I deserve?
  - 2. Can I get my spouse to live up to his/her part?
  - 3. Is there some other way I can get my needs besides him/her?

## BOUNDARIES AND MARRIAGE

### (4) SOME BOUNDARIES

- A. Marriage must come first before personal desires.
- B. Be clear and specific what you desire and why.
- C. Be excited about what your spouse wants individually. You are "one" and it is for you too.
- D. Make sure for long term planning so that much thoughts and sacrifice can be put in together.
- E. An example would be the homemaker wife decides to pursue studies and work in mid-life. Team effort involves time and funds.

## BOUNDARIES AND MARRIAGE

### (5) CONFLICT IN KNOWN PROBLEMS

- A. Agree that the spouse with the problem is responsible for it. If you have talked about his tardiness and he does that again, he will be left behind.
- B. If you want help, confronting is an attempt to heal, not to control. "I cannot see what I am doing that. Please let me know."
- C. If you know about your own problem, you have to fix it to build your own character.
- D. If it is your spouse's problem, do not enable her. Follow through with the consequences.

## BOUNDARIES AND MARRIAGE

### (7) RULES OF COMMUNICATION

- A. Listen and seek to understand before you seek to be understood.
- B. Use reflective listening and questioning to help to understand. "So it really hurts you when I do that. I get it."
- C. Do not devalue or explain away, just listen with empathy.
- D. Use the "I" statement to show that you are taking responsibility for your feelings. "When you are late, I begin to feel not cared for."

## BOUNDARIES AND MARRIAGE

### (6) CONFLICT IN UNKNOWN PROBLEMS

- A. Agree with each other to talk about what you notice, becoming partners in discovery.
- B. When confronted, be open and search own life.
- C. Seek feedback from others for confirmation.
- D. Ask to show each time it happens whether there is a pattern.
- E. Give grace and time for change to take place.  
(Psa 19:12,13) *Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.  
Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.*

## BOUNDARIES AND MARRIAGE

### (8) CHANGES NOTICED

- A. Allowing spouse to say no to you.
- B. Humbly admitting you have been trying to control spouse, by withdrawing, attacking and making spouse guilty.
- C. Submitting to God's process of learning boundaries and self-control.
- D. Asking spouse feedback and to feel love for spouse's needs and hurts.
- E. Depending less on spouse's reactions and usefulness but more on God and own values to make you happy.

## REFLECTIONS

Jesus, this lesson is spiky for us; it pokes us where we know we're not behaving (or even believing!) as we should.

We want to open display with our actions that we are Jesus-followers and the Holy Spirit is active in our lives.

We want to be the best of who You made us to be.

We want Your peace to rule our hearts.

Help us when we're challenged and frustrated, or worried and anxious to keep our eyes on You and our boundaries strong. We rely on You, Holy Spirit, to direct and redirect us when we get off-course.

Help us, Lord! We love You. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

(Lysa)



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## REFLECTIONS

- (1) Please go through the audio twice and share three blessings that you have received. Be specific and in detail. What are the blessings? Why are you blessed? How do you apply them to stretch and grow?
- (2) Please share three ways how you can use the teaching in your ministry. Please give examples of the issues and your plans to resolve them and to grow. Use the what, why, when, who, where and how you will be sharing with others. Think through and be specific.