



Marriage Boundaries

Adapted from "Boundaries" series by Wayne Murray

Our culture makes it difficult for marriages. God has some very defined commands regarding marriage. In order to keep His commands, convictions are needed. Convictions are matters of conscience, the voice of the Holy Spirit. Convictions are standards you have for your relationships that keep you within the boundaries of your marriage covenant. Robin Weidner has a good explanation of a boundary. She states:

In marriage, think of a boundary as a limit we set that protects the sacredness of our marriage – keeping us far from anything that could hurt our relationship. Certainly, God's plan for sexual purity has always included boundaries. As Solomon said of the wayward woman, "Keep a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house..." (Proverbs 5:8).

We shouldn't be surprised then that Satan's very first attack on Adam and Eve came in the form of an all-out assault on the only boundary God had set. "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" (Genesis 3:1).

One thing is for sure, Satan's enticing lies then sound eerily familiar to the way he attacks today: Did God really say? Who says this is wrong? How could it be wrong when it looks and feels so good? What are God's motives? Is God withholding from you? Does God want you to miss out on knowledge? Pleasure?

Often Satan seeks to desensitize us to the harmfulness of impurity by taking us there one small boundary break at a time. The truth is that God's boundaries are evidence of His goodness and His desire to protect us from painful consequences. And, if you look at the many Scriptures that set sexual boundaries in context, you'll find that they are wrapped in love.

Establishing good boundaries will not only help protect your marriage, but it will also create a refuge where you can taste the glorious freedom of being naked and unashamed (Genesis 2:25).¹

¹ Robin Weidner, "Did God Really Say? Setting Godly Boundaries in Marriage," Focus on the Family, 2008, <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/marriage/sex-and-intimacy/building-a-pure-marriage/did-god-really-say> (accessed July 6, 2017).

COURAGE

C1: Vows are exchanged in a marriage ceremony. If you are married what are the vows you made? What does the word “vow” mean to you?

C2: How do you keep the vows made on your wedding day?

C3: Read and answer the following.

Genesis 2:24 (ESV) Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Mark 10:9 (ESV) What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.

Ephesians 5:25 (ESV) Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

Hebrews 13:4 (ESV) Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.

- Write out three commands you can extract from these scriptures.

- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you love, honor and are faithful to your spouse. Write out a plan to improve. If you are not yet married, write out a plan for faithfulness within marriage.

STRENGTH

S1: Convictions are matters of conscience. They are standards you set up in your relationship that keep you within the boundaries of marriage.

- What convictions do you have in place that set up sexual boundaries in your life? List at least four convictions.

- Why do you think these boundaries are important?

S2: Some make the mistake of bringing their work home all the time and are disengaged when with their family.

- What convictions do you have in place that set up work boundaries? List at least four convictions.

- Why do you think these boundaries are important?

S3: In the next thirty days, meet with three men and discuss sexual boundaries and work boundaries. What did you glean from these conversations?

ENDURANCE

E1: Children are needy, especially when they are young. In different seasons of life, children are going to require more time and attention. However, you never want to get to the point where your kids take priority over your spouse. Read and answer the following.

“It could be the slogan of a generation: 'Til grey do us part. Divorce among people over fifty — and much older — is on a dramatic increase. In fact, it's the only demographic where that's true. Marriages of many decades are imploding, exploding, and plain old fizzling out.”²

- Why do you think so many empty nesters are getting divorced after the children leave the house?
- What convictions do you have in place that set up boundaries regarding children? List at least four convictions.
- Purchase a copy of “The 5 Love Languages” by Gary Chapman. Work through this with your spouse and children. If you are single, purchase the singles edition. What did you glean from learning this information? Write out a plan to speak your spouse’s and children’s love language.

E2: What convictions do you have in place that set up financial boundaries? List at least four convictions. Read and answer the following.

Proverbs 3:6 (ESV)

- How does this scripture apply to your financial boundaries?

² “‘Til grey do us part: the dramatic rise of grey divorce,” CBCRadio, January 26, 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thesundayedition/social-media-bubbles-dyson-on-race-one-child-policy-til-grey-do-us-part-1.3949841/til-grey-do-us-part-the-dramatic-rise-of-grey-divorce-1.3953128> (accessed July 6, 2017).

E3: You are going to fight. The thing to remember is that when you fight, fight fair. Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 4:26 (ESV)

- What convictions do you have in place that set up conflict boundaries? List at least four convictions.

- What are five rules of conflict you should never have in your home?

E4: In the next week, discuss this lesson with your spouse. Together, write out your convictions in these areas. For the next thirty days, pray for your spouse before you go to bed. If you are not married, use this time to pray either for the marriage you want to have one day, or for the marriage of someone in your family/close friends. What did you glean from this?