



Sexual Boundaries

Adapted from “Boundaries” series by Wayne Murray

I cannot think of one area of our culture that would not be positively impacted if we would set up sexual boundaries. Sexual boundaries should be in place for both married and single men. Setting up boundaries will help you establish and maintain a healthy relationship both now and in the future. Rather than listing boundaries, I like how this article reshaped my view on boundaries.

Some people think of boundaries as the ability to say “No” when appropriate and set limits. That is an important aspect, but we must base our boundaries on a clear sense of who we are and where we begin and end as individuals. I like to ask, “What belongs on my plate?” I am responsible for how I handle my history (both the good and the bad), for owning who I am, for the choices I make and how I relate to others. When I fail to own proper responsibility for these things, I am in danger of violating both my own boundaries and other people’s as well. This especially shows up in our intimate relationships.

Having appropriate boundaries in your marriage starts with first knowing yourself and owning what belongs to you: Your feelings, thoughts, choices, behaviours, talents, strengths, weaknesses and needs, as well as understanding how your past impacts who you are now. Then we take all of who we are and recognize that our spouse is a separate and unique individual with all of their own feelings, thoughts, choices, behaviours, talents, strengths, weaknesses, needs and past. They are not us and we are not them. We must recognize and validate this truth in order to achieve real intimacy.¹

¹ Wendy Kittlitz, “Boundaries in Marriage,” Focus on the Family, 2012, <http://www.focusonthefamily.ca/clergycare/articles/Boundaries.in.marriage.html> (accessed July 6, 2017).

“Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible.”



COURAGE

C1: Describe the sex education you received while growing up.

C2: List some sexual boundaries you believe should be set up that would benefit all areas of society.

C3: For the next thirty days, do a Bible study on the area of sex. What did you discover from this study?

STRENGTH

S1: Studies have found that the most sexually satisfied people were married people, who waited until they were married to have sex.² Read and answer the following.

1 Corinthians 6:15–16 (ESV)

- From these verses, what do you learn about sexual boundaries?
- What does Paul mean when he says, “The two will become one flesh?”
- Sex is more than just a physical act. There is a chemical and spiritual bond when people engage in sexual activity. Spend thirty days researching the chemical and spiritual bond that is created. What did you discover from this research?

S2: Marriage is the boundary for sexual activity. Read and answer the following.

1 Corinthians 6:18–20 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are three things you ascertain about sexual boundaries?
- What are some ways you can flee from sexual immorality?

S3: In the next thirty days talk with three men about setting up sexual boundaries. What did you glean from these conversations?

² Bill Hendrick, “Happier Marriages, More Satisfying Sex Among the Perks, Study Finds,” Web MD, December 28, 2010, <http://www.webmd.com/sex-relationships/news/20101227/theres-benefits-in-delaying-sex-until-marriage#1> (accessed Aug 4, 2017).

ENDURANCE

E1: What is the difference between a conviction and a commandment?

E2: Write out the convictions you have in order to provide protection to yourself before you break a commandment.

E3: Look at the following convictions for both married and single men. On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well rate yourself on how well you live out these convictions. Write a plan to improve in every conviction. Feel free to add any convictions you have appropriated into your life.

- Married Men
 - Don't travel alone with members of the opposite sex.
 - Don't eat alone with members of the opposite sex.
 - Don't confide in or counsel members of the opposite sex.
 - Listen to your spouse.
 - Be accountable to your spouse.

- Single Men
 - Apply the married men's list above when interacting with married people.
 - No Sleepovers (Eight-year-olds have sleepovers. Just decide my boyfriend or girlfriend never sleeps or spends the night at my apartment or my house.).
 - Have accountability.
 - What other convictions enter your mind?

E4: Set standards that no one else in your culture understands because culture will bait you to the edge and invite you to step over the line. Then, culture will berate you with guilt and condemnation and pain. If you take the wrong fork in the road in this area, it can change the trajectory of your life. Set up boundaries and you will not regret it. In the next thirty days, find three men and discuss this lesson with them. Discuss whether the boundaries you set are too extreme or too lax? In the next five years, will you regret having these types of boundaries? Why or why not?