

Vox U :: Boundaries :: Class 1

Proverbs 4:23 NIV

Above all else, guard your heart,
for everything you do flows from it.

Proverbs 4:23-27 MSG

Keep vigilant watch over your heart;
that's where life starts.
Don't talk out of both sides of your mouth;
avoid careless banter, white lies, and gossip.
Keep your eyes straight ahead;
ignore all sideshow distractions.
Watch your step,
and the road will stretch out smooth before you.
Look neither right nor left;
leave evil in the dust.

James 5:12

Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. All you need to say is a simple “Yes” or “No.” Otherwise, you will be condemned.

James 4:2-3

You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

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Different types of people:

1. Have no boundaries for themselves and can't see other people's boundaries. It's kind of an obliviousness to all things boundaries. These people make others who are close to them feel anxious. They are also often unapologetic. They are really good at getting stuff done.
2. People with great boundaries for themselves: work, family, personal things but walk through others boundaries. The rest of us often look up to these people, because they seem to have it all together until you get in their way.
3. People who have no boundaries themselves but do have a greater awareness than most about other people's boundaries. This is often the friend that apologizes for everything.
4. This fourth person or fourth type, only has boundaries. They have gotten so good at having boundaries and being aware of other people's boundaries that boundaries are all they have they don't actually have true, meaningful relationships anymore. These are people that typically only do things or show up to things that are their idea. They are really good at getting stuff done.

Group Questions:

- Come up with a group definition of boundaries.
Discuss these scriptures Galatians 6: 2-5, Matthew 5:37
- Discuss words you wrote down at the beginning of class and add new ones.
- In what circumstances are you likely to take on more than is comfortable for you?
- What does it take to know God's boundaries?
- What's the danger of being unclear about God's boundaries?
- What is the danger of being unclear about your boundaries?
- What boundary type or mix of types do you think you are?
- What do you want to work on personally?

Boundaries and Your Family

Points to Consider

- When your relationship with one person affects your relationships with others, it is a sign of boundary problems.
- A person who does not stand on his own financially is a child.
- Triangulation is failure to resolve a conflict directly by involving a third person to take sides. God wants you to resolve your conflicts directly and in private. Mat 18:15
- Boundaries can prevent resentment about giving to parents. 2Cor 12:4
- To grow spiritually, you must leave the authority of your parents and put yourself under God's authority. Gal 4:1-7, Mat 23:9, Mat 10:35-37



Poor planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part.

Law of Power = You only have the power to change yourself. You are responsible for how you relate to a 'problem' person.

PLAN FOR SOLVING FAMILY BOUNDARY PROBLEMS

1	Identify your discomfort.
2	Identify the boundary violation that is causing your discomfort.
3	Identify the need you are trying to meet that makes it difficult to set boundaries.
4	Reach out to God and His family to meet your need.
5	Practice boundary setting in a safe environment.
6	Protect yourself from boundary violations.
7	Forgive past boundary violations. Expect nothing from the violator. Let it go. Move forward.
8	Begin today to respond rather than react. Make a conscious choice within your boundaries.
9	Learn to love in freedom and responsibility, not guilt.

Discussion Questions

- If you were to use the plan above to solve a boundary problem, at what step would you begin to struggle? Why?
- What can you do to make it easier to successfully complete the difficult step(s) in the plan?

Vox U :: Boundaries :: Class 2

Boundaries and Your Spouse

Points to Consider

- You are responsible for communicating your feelings to your spouse.
- You will not get everything you want. Sometimes your wants will conflict with the wants of your spouse.
- Give freely, but not past the point of love. 2Cor 9:7
You are responsible for setting the limits.
- If your spouse crosses limits, you must let him/her suffer the consequences of those actions.
- Set boundaries for how you will behave in certain situations. You can't control how your spouse behaves, but you can control how you behave.
- It is important to communicate your boundaries clearly and lovingly then follow through on the consequences you have established. Mat 18:15, Jas 2:14-26
- Submission is the free choice of one person to another. Eph 5:21 (167)

Discussion Questions

What behaviors from you are likely to make it easier for your spouse to make the free choice to be submissive?

Vox U :: Boundaries :: Class 2

Boundaries and Your Children

Points to Consider

Discipline = an external boundary designed to develop internal boundaries

- Discipline includes
 - ▶ Pro-activity, prevention, instruction, Eph 6:4
 - ▶ Correction, chastisement, consequences, Pro 15:10
- The lessons we learn from discipline help us not repeat mistakes, Heb 2:10
- Take responsibility for your needs and teach children to take responsibility for their needs

Step 1	Identify your needs. Help children learn to express their feelings and needs.
Step 2	Initiate responsible care-taking for yourself. Allow children to experience age-appropriate consequences for what they do. Heb 5:14 If you choose to _____, you're also choosing to _____.

- Teach children to delay gratification, Pro 6:6-11, Luke 14:28.
- Teach children that the world does not revolve around them. They must learn to accept 'no' from others.
- Learning to respect others' boundaries helps us develop empathy for others. This gives us a foundation to learn to love God and others.
- A person with well-developed boundaries has an internal sense of motivation.

Discussion Questions

- Regarding discipline, what success have you had with being proactive (prevention, instruction)?
- What are some challenges with corrective discipline?

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Problems

Problem-1 saying yes to the bad

Problem-2 saying no to the good

Problem-3 not respecting other's boundaries, aggression, manipulation

Problem-4 being non-responsive

Matthew 7:12

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.

Boundaries can be confusing and complicated so this is a great question to make it simple - How do I want to be treated? A simple question that many of us have taught our kiddos I'm sure.

Boundary pain -

The words hurt and harm are important here.

Hurt and harm can be the same thing, but understanding there may be a difference between hurt and harm can help you actually gain something from your pain. I like to think of hurting as discomfort and although we don't like it, being uncomfortable and hurting a bit is a good thing.

The difference between hurt and harm is Hurt is temporary. Harm is long-term. We shouldn't harm those we love, harm causes withdrawal and self-doubt, and distance.

A good question to ask yourself when pondering a boundary with someone is, is this hurting me or am I hurting them? Could this be harmful or become harmful?

Circumstances -

the book also talks about this as load and last week we read Gal 6:2-5 which talked about carrying each others burdens and carrying your own load.

So here's an example, the spouse comes home from a hard day at work. or Spouse who stays home had a hard day.

So others don't know, they aren't aware of your circumstances, they don't know what you're carrying. Others don't know your load and can't carry your burden unless they understand your circumstance.

A good question to ask your self is what do I need to communicate so my circumstances can be understood?

Vox U :: Boundaries :: Class 3

Gift - Grant - Loan

Luke 6:38

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Ecclesiastes 3: 12

I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live.

What is a gift?

Something given willingly to someone without payment. It is freely given without expectations.

This is where it can be hard with some givers because a true gift has no expectations attached to it.

What is a grant?

A grant is a gift that has known expectations. There are rules, requirements, reporting, questioning from the giver.

The hard thing here is that a giver often gives a grant without the receiver knowing it's a grant. the receiver thinks it's a true freely given gift.

What is a loan?

A loan is borrowed and has terms for repayment.

Sometimes a giver gives a loan and the receiver thinks it's a gift. This happens less but when it's done it's more damaging. Trust is broken, the relationship is harmed.

Solutions:

As our kids mature we need to shift to more true gifts and fewer grants as we see them knowing natural consequences and taking care of their things.

As adults, we need to manage exceptions. Ahead of someone giving you a gift you need to be able to discern if it's a gift, grant or a loan. This really depends on the giver. There might be people in your life that you need to have in the category of grant maker and not gifter and just knowing where to file them in your mind can be helpful in having healthy boundaries which leads to a good relationship with them.

Another solution with extended family is suggesting certain gifts. Zoo passes, Museum tickets, a concert, chiefs game. This can create a really fun one-time experience with a grant or loan giver and then it's over, there are no long-term rules and requirements. So, this is a healthy boundary that can end up being a lot of fun.

Proverbs 8:16:

A gift opens the way and ushers the giver into the presence of the great.

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Your Self and God

Points to Consider

- Money isn't the problem; it's the 'love' of money that's the problem, 1Tim 6:10. Learn to say, 'no' to unnecessary spending.
- People who don't manage their time inconvenience and frustrate others.
- Those who fail to complete tasks or finish them poorly have boundary problems.
- It is important to set boundaries on your tongue, Pro 10:19, Pro 17:27, James 3:9-10, Mat 12:36.
- Though it is difficult to admit your problems to others, God designed us to need encouragement from others, Ecc 4:10, John 15:1-6, Eph 4:16.
- Will power is not sufficient to control self, Col 2:20-23.
- Even if your boundary problems are not your fault, they are your responsibility.

- Isolation makes you spiritually vulnerable, Luke 11:24-26).
- When others in our support system let us know how our lack of self-boundaries hurts them, love rather than fear becomes a motivator.
- You need people in your support group who will be loving and supportive without rescuing you. They must understand that rescuing you is not loving. God teaches through consequences, Gal 6:1.

Discussion Questions

- When you get the urge to rescue someone, what can you do to resist the urge?
- For whom can you serve as an accountability partner to encourage without rescuing?
- Where can you turn for encouragement?

Points to Consider

- God allows you to experience the consequences of your behavior.
- God respects your 'no.' You have a choice. God prefers that you be honest with Him. Ecc 5:5, Psa 51:6, John 4:23-24
- God insists you respect His boundaries. He will not always do what you want Him to do.
- God wants to know what you think, Isa 1:18. He takes that into account as He decides what to do. God wants you to stay in relationship with Him regardless of what He decides.
- Boundaries help you be the best you can be – in God's image, John 17:20-23. You need to be clear about your responsibilities and about God's responsibilities.

Discussion Questions

- In what way is it difficult to be honest with God?
- In what way is it difficult to accept a "no" from God?
- What can you do to be sure that you stay in relationship with God even when you are in conflict with Him?
- What can you do to be sure you know which responsibilities are yours and which are God's?