

SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES of BOUNDARIES and WALLS:

1. The Law of Sowing and Reaping

- Galatians 6:7-8

⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life (NIV).

- Behaviors have consequences. (e.g. *smoking, over-spending, exercise, diet*)
 - When God tells us we will reap what we sow, he is not threatening or punishing us, he is simply letting us know how things really are.
 - Sowing and reaping are important in our growth (spiritual, emotional)
- People without boundaries interrupt how things should work...with detrimental results. (e.g. *The 'Rescuing Parent' of an irresponsible child*)
 - The rescuer is co-dependent...and ends up paying the consequences over and over again.
 - Boundaries break the co-dependency and allow for the law of sowing and reaping to happen.
- Many people won't change unless they feel pain. Confronting an irresponsible person is not painful...consequences are.
- Proverbs 9:8

*So don't bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you.
But correct the wise, and they will love you (NLT).*

2. The Law of Responsibility

- Galatians 5:13-14

¹³ For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. ¹⁴ For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

- One of our most important responsibilities is to love people.

- Problems arise when boundaries of responsibility become confused.
 - Who is responsible for whom.
 - This changes as people mature (*e.g. children becoming adults*)
 - We can't control others.
 - We can't make others grow, transform, or change.
 - We can only be responsible for ourselves.
- We give to needs and put limits on sin.
 - We are responsible 'to' others when we help them. (*e.g. Good Sam.*)
 - We set limits on the destructive behavior of others we have authority over (*e.g. children and house rules, workplace codes of conduct*)
- Proverbs 19:19

Hot-tempered people must pay the penalty. If you rescue them once, you will have to do it again.

3. The Law of Power

- We are powerless against sin (Romans 7:14-15; 18-19; 21-23).

¹⁴ The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate.

¹⁸ And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. ¹⁹ I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.

²¹ I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. ²² I love God's law with all my heart. ²³ But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.
- We have the power to agree with the truth about our sin problem.
 - Acceptance and confession (to agree with—yes, this is me).
- We have the power to submit our inability to God.
 - We have the power to humble ourselves and ask God and others to help us heal.
- We have the power to search and ask God and others to reveal more and more about what is within our boundaries.
- We have the power to turn from the wrong attachments (idols) that cause us to sin and back towards intimacy with God.
 - Repentance (turn back toward)
 - To see our sinful parts and desire change

- We have the power to seek out those that we have injured and reconcile.
 - Taking responsible to correct what our sin destroys.
- We have the power to change ourselves and not others.
 - As we change, we influence others to change in response to us.
 - Relationships are a system, we don't experience life isolated from others.

4. The Law of Respect

- We fear that others will not accept or respect, us or our boundaries.
 - We focus on others (*they*) and lose clarity of self or our positions.
- Sometimes it's us who can't respect other's boundaries.
 - "How could he refuse to come by and pick me up? It's on his way! He could find some 'time alone' some other time."
 - "That's so selfish of her to not come to the workday. After all, the rest of us are sacrificing."
 - "What do you mean, 'no?' I just need the money for a little while."
 - "It seems that, after all I do for you, you could at least do me this one little favor."
- If we want others to respect our boundaries, we must respect their boundaries. (Matthew 7:12).

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

 - We need to love the boundaries of others in order to command respect for our own.
- If we respect the freedom of others, then we won't be offended when they set a boundary with us.

5. The Law of Motivation

- Boundaries helps us keep our motivations healthy.
 - I say 'yes' out of love and not fear or obligation.
 - I resist doing and doing but becoming increasingly resentful.
- False motives (for saying 'yes') can keep us from setting healthy boundaries:
 - Fear of loss of love or abandonment.
 - I give to get love.
 - Fear of other's anger.
 - Because of emotional immaturity, past pain.

- Fear of loneliness.
 - Give in to win friends.
- Fear of losing the ‘good me’ inside.
 - Saying ‘yes’ is what makes me good.
- Guilt.
 - Doing good things to make up for the bad things.
 - Saying ‘no’ makes me feel bad.
- Payback.
 - I feel a burden to give because I owe the one who gave to me.
- Approval.
 - I need the other to accept me.
- Over-identification with other’s loss.
 - Not having dealt with my own disappointments and loss, I don’t want others to feel the same.
- True motives always seek the best for self and others (Philippians 4:8-9).

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

6. The Law of Evaluation

- We should consider whether a boundary would harm, not hurt.
 - Things that hurt us can be good (dentist, surgery).
 - Things that feel good can actually harm us (too much sugar)
- Empathy can help us set boundaries that may cause pain.
 - Enables us to see how good can come about despite the pain.
- Proverbs 27:6
Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

7. The Law of Proactivity

- Not setting boundaries results in people stuffing their negative feelings.
- Eventually negative feelings will reveal themselves.
 - Leak
 - Explosion (pent up anger, resentment, powerlessness)
- Setting boundaries eliminates the possibility of a violent emotional reaction.
- Mild emotional reactions may signal a need for boundaries.

- Proverbs 28:26

Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe.

8. The Law of Envy

- Envy = Wanting the 'good' that someone else has which I do not have, and hating them for it.
 - e.g. Putting down the accomplishment of another.
- Envy puts our focus outside of our boundaries.
 - So we violate our boundaries or others boundaries to get what we do not or cannot have.
- James 4:2

You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it.

9. The Law of Activity

- We learn boundaries when we naturally push against our cultural context.
 - e.g. Children learning how the world works w/out breaking spirit.
- Be willing to try and fail. Don't fail to try.
- 2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

- James 2:17

So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

10. The Law of Exposure

- Relationships suffer from unexpressed boundaries.
 - Often we have boundaries, but keep them secret. We get upset when they are violated, which confuses others.
- Your boundaries need to be made visible to others and communicated to them in relationship.
 - Say them.
 - Enforce them.

- We should be honest about our boundaries and bring them into the light (Ephesians 4:25-27).

²⁵ Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶ "In your anger do not sin:" Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold.

Material for this teaching/coaching week was taken from:

Cloud, Henry, and John Sims Townsend. *Boundaries: When to Say Yes, When to Say No to Take Control of Your Life*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Pub. House, 1992.

Establishing Boundaries

Removing Walls



Boundaries and Walls: Week 3

Spiritual Principles of Boundaries and Walls

1. The Law of _____ and _____.

- Galatians 6:7-8

⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

- Behaviors have _____.
- People without boundaries _____ how things should work...with detrimental results.
- Many people won't change unless they feel _____.
- Proverbs 9:8

*So don't bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you.
But correct the wise, and they will love you.*

2. The Law of _____.

- Galatians 5:13-14

¹³ For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. ¹⁴ For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

- One of our most important responsibilities is to _____ people.
- Problems arise when boundaries of responsibility become _____.
- We _____ to needs and put _____ on sin.
- Proverbs 19:19

Hot-tempered people must pay the penalty. If you rescue them once, you will have to do it again.

3. The Law of _____.

- We are _____ against sin (Romans 7:14-15; 18-19; 21-23).

¹⁴ The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate.

¹⁸ And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. ¹⁹ I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.

²¹ I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. ²² I love God's law with all my heart. ²³ But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.

- We have the power to agree with the _____ about our sin problem.
- We have the power to _____ our inability to God.
- We have the power to _____ and _____ God and others to reveal more and more about what is within our boundaries.
- We have the power to turn from the _____ (idols) that cause us to sin and back towards intimacy with God.
- We have the power to seek out those that we have injured and _____.
- We have the power to change _____ and not _____.

4. The Law of _____.

- We fear that others will not _____ or _____, us or our boundaries.
- Sometimes it's _____ who can't respect _____ boundaries.
- If we want others to respect _____ boundaries, we must respect _____ boundaries. (Matthew 7:12).
So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.
- If we respect the _____ of others, then we won't be _____ when they set a boundary with us.

5. The Law of _____.

- Boundaries helps us keep our motivations _____.
- _____ motives (for saying 'yes') can keep us from setting healthy boundaries:
 - Fear of loss of love or _____.
 - Fear of other's _____.
 - Fear of _____.
 - Fear of losing the ' _____ ' inside.
 - _____.
 - _____.
 - _____.
 - Over-identification with other's _____.
- _____ motives always seek the best for self and others (Philippians 4:8-9).

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

6. The Law of _____.

- We should consider whether a boundary would _____, not _____.
- _____ can help us set boundaries that may cause pain.
- Proverbs 27:6
Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

7. The Law of _____.

- Not setting boundaries results in people _____ their negative feelings.
- Eventually negative feelings will _____ themselves.
- Setting boundaries _____ the possibility of a violent emotional reaction.

- Mild emotional reactions may signal a _____ for boundaries.
- Proverbs 28:26

Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe.

8. The Law of _____.

- Envy = Wanting the ‘ _____ ’ that someone else has which I do not have, and _____ them for it.
- Envy puts our focus _____ of our boundaries.
- James 4:2

You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it.

9. The Law of _____.

- We _____ boundaries when we naturally push against our cultural context.
- Be willing to _____ and _____. Don't _____ to _____.
- 2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

- James 2:17

So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

10. The Law of _____.

- Relationships suffer from _____ boundaries.
- Your boundaries need to be made _____ to others and communicated to them in relationship.
- We should be _____ about our boundaries and bring them into the light (Eph. 4:25-27).

²⁵ Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶ "In your anger do not sin." Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold.