

that any choice to withhold giving is a lack of love

- * if you have resources
- * if you see a need
- * if you choose not to help

In 1992, Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend wrote a book titled, *Boundaries*. The inside cover of the book says: "Boundaries are personal property lines that define who you are and who you are not, and influence all areas of your life.

"*Physical* boundaries help you determine who may touch you and under what circumstances. *Mental* boundaries give you freedom to have your own thoughts and opinions. *Emotional* boundaries help you deal with your own emotions and disengage from the harmful, manipulative emotions of others. *Spiritual* boundaries help you distinguish God's will from your own and give you renewed awe for your Creator."

On pages 27-28, the authors wrote: "Any confusion of responsibility and ownership in our lives is a problem of *boundaries*. Just as homeowners set physical property lines around their land, we need to set mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual boundaries for our lives to help us distinguish what is our responsibility and what isn't. As we see in Sherrie's many struggles [in the book], the inability to set appropriate boundaries at appropriate times with the appropriate people can be very destructive.

"And this is one of the most serious problems facing Christians today. Many sincere, dedicated believers struggle with tremendous confusion about when it is biblically appropriate to set limits.

"When confronted with their lack of boundaries, they raise good questions:

1. Can I set limits and still be a loving person?
2. What are legitimate boundaries?
3. What if someone is upset or hurt by my boundaries?
4. How do I answer someone who wants my time, love, energy, or money?
5. Why do I feel guilty or afraid when I consider setting boundaries?
6. How do boundaries relate to submission?
7. Aren't boundaries selfish?

"Misinformation about the Bible's answers to these issues has led to much wrong teaching about boundaries. Not only that, but many clinical psychological symptoms, such as depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, addictions, impulsive disorders, guilt problems, shame issues, panic disorders, and marital and relational struggles, find their root in conflicts with boundaries."

TRUE LOVE

In chapter 2, the authors described what boundaries look like.

* Me and not me

"Boundaries define us. They define *what is me* and *what is not me*. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins, leading me to a sense of ownership.

"Knowing what I am to own and take responsibility for gives me freedom. If I know where my yard begins and ends, I am free to do with it what I like. Taking responsibility for my life opens up many different options. However, if I do not 'own' my life, my choices and options become very limited. . . ."

* To and For

"We are responsible *to* others and *for* ourselves. . . ."

* Good In, Bad Out

"Boundaries help us to distinguish our property so that we can take care of it. . . .We need to keep things that will nurture us inside our fences and keep things that will harm us outside. In short, *boundaries help us keep the good in and the bad out*. They guard our treasures (Matt. 7:6) so that people will not steal them. They keep the pearls inside, and the pigs outside. . . ."

* God and Boundaries

"The concept of boundaries comes from the very nature of God. God defines himself as a distinct, separate being, and he is responsible for himself. He defines and takes responsibility for his personality by telling us what he thinks, feels, plans, allows, will not allow, likes, and dislikes. . . ."

* 8 Examples of Boundaries

Skin	Time
Words	Emotional Distance
Truth	Other People
Geographical Distance	Consequences

* What's Within My Boundaries? -- (10 items listed)

Feelings	Limits
Attitudes and Beliefs	Talents
Behaviors	Thoughts
Choices	Desires
Values	Love

In chapter 3, the authors described 4 boundary problems.

1. Compliant: Saying "Yes" to the Bad
2. Avoidant: Saying "No" to the Good
3. Controller: Not Respecting Others' Boundaries
4. Nonresponsives: Not Hearing the Needs of Others

In chapter 4, the authors described how boundaries are developed.

In chapter 5, the authors described the 10 laws of boundaries.

In chapter 6, the authors described common boundary myths.

1. If I set boundaries, I'm being selfish
2. Boundaries are a sign of disobedience
3. If I begin setting boundaries, I will be hurt by others
4. If I set boundaries, I will hurt others
5. Boundaries mean that I am angry
6. When others set boundaries, it injures me
7. Boundaries cause feelings of guilt
8. Boundaries are permanent, and I'm afraid of burning my bridges

In chapter 7, the authors described boundaries and your family.

In chapter 8, the authors described boundaries and your friends.

In chapter 9, the authors described boundaries and your spouse. On page 157, they wrote: "If there were ever a relationship where boundaries could get confused, it is marriage, where by design husband and wife 'become one flesh' (Eph. 5:31). Boundaries foster separateness. Marriage has as one of its goals the giving up of separateness and becoming, instead of two, one. What a potential state of confusion, especially for someone who does not have clear boundaries to begin with! More marriages fail because of poor boundaries than for any other reason. . . ."

In chapter 10, the authors described boundaries and your children.

In chapter 11, the authors described boundaries and work.

In chapter 12, the authors described boundaries and your self.

In chapter 13, the authors described boundaries and God.

Isaiah 49:14	wrong feelings
15-17	truth of God's love
Ezek. 33:10	realization of the consequences of sin
11	truth of God's love
Rom. 8:17	heirs of God -- joint-heirs with Christ
Matt. 22:36-39	love God -- love neighbor as yourself
Rom. 12:1-2	living sacrifice -- to God & to others
Phil. 2:3	esteem others better
John 15:13	lay down your life