

# UNFRIENDED: BIBLICAL BOUNDARIES

Series: Friend-ing & Unfriend-Ing, Pt 3    February 16, 2020    ser3912

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Video: "If Bible Characters had an iPhone" [https://youtu.be/nt5k\\_tO6768](https://youtu.be/nt5k_tO6768)

If Smartphones and social media existed in biblical times, this funny video would probably portray a true picture of how people would have connected and shared information about their lives.

Speaking of social media, some of you have probably seen this picture of Christopher John and me that Gina, aka "Mom-Mom Paparazzi" took of us two Fridays ago.

Gina found a pint-sized tux on one of her Goodwill excursions and was looking for an opportunity to dress him up and take a few shots. When she learned that I had to wear my tux when I volunteered as a buddy for Tim Tebow's Night to Shine, she couldn't resist doing a photo shoot with our little star before I headed off.



For those of you who are unfamiliar with A Night to Shine, it's an annual prom held for individuals with special needs, or what I like to call "special abilities". The local Night to Shine is held at Calvary Chapel of Gloucester County. This year we provided them the use of our kitchen to prepare the

meal for the event. Here's a selfie of me with Chris, who was my buddy, and his good friend Mike.

When I was talking with Chris, he said he was shy and preferred to be alone. But every time I turned around, he was introducing me to someone he knew through an event or an outing. His strength was in building one on one relationships. Mike had a phenomenal ability to remember information and facts. When we were on the dance floor, he would tell the year the song came out and in what movie it was featured. He was amazing.

What was unique and very special, is that neither of them would go to any of the fun activities that evening without each other and they made sure they included me. It was a boundary that they set up with each other and that they also had with me.

Relationship boundaries are set up to protect us and our interactions with other people. We do this on Facebook and in real life by how we "Friend" or "Unfriend" someone. God knew the importance of these boundaries way before we discovered them. Today we are going to look at what it means to "Unfriend" someone on Facebook or in real life relationships and to create Biblical boundaries.

Let's pray.

Several weeks ago, Pastor Bruce spoke about "blocking" someone from our lives and helped us get a clear picture of the four levels of friendship.

Last week Gina and our youth defined not only what a friend is but defined being a true friend to Jesus.

Today we are going to embrace the truth of "unfriending" and setting Biblical boundaries.

What does it mean to unfriend someone on Facebook?

Unfriend lets you remove a person from your Facebook friend list but still allows you to view his/her profile and their posts, if the posts are public.

What this means is that you put a boundary in place, so they don't see everything you're doing on Facebook. They are not included in that part of your life on Facebook.

Here are some of the reasons why people unfriend on Facebook:

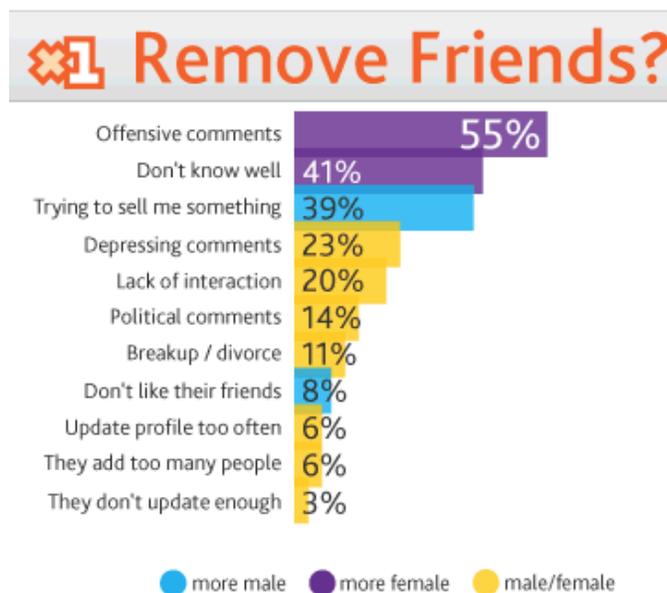
As you can see, most of these are the results of a boundary being crossed or expectation not being met.

What are boundaries and why do we create them?

A boundary is a personal property line that marks those things for which we are responsible and want to protect. Boundaries help us distinguish our own spiritual and personal property lines so we can take care of ourselves and be good stewards of **who God created us to be**.

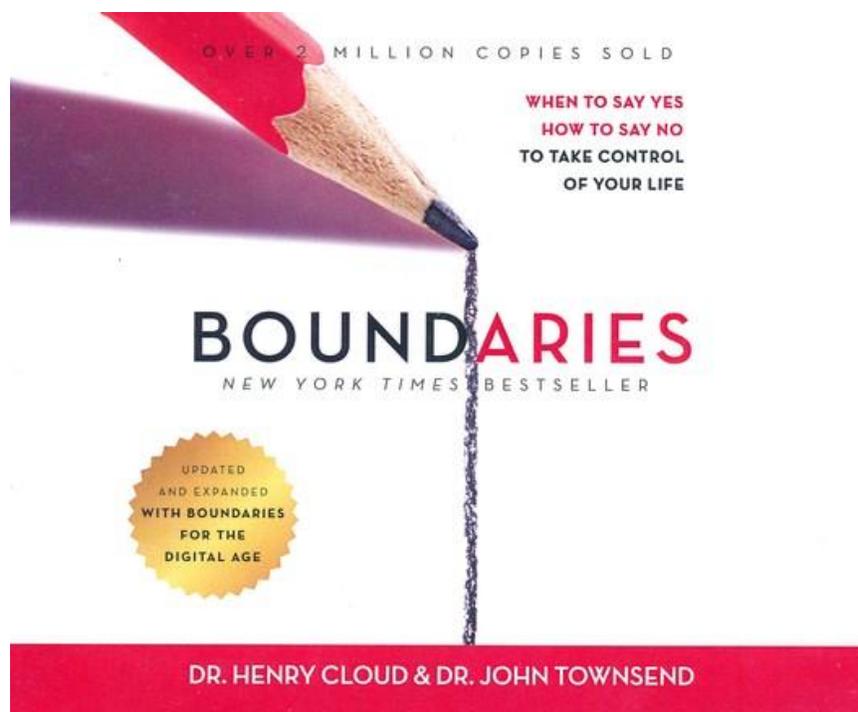
Boundaries are like fences to keep the good in and the bad out. They guard our treasures so people will not steal them.

Today we are just touching the surface on establishing boundaries and I encourage you to read the book, *Boundaries* by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr John Townsend. It's a great book on how to establish biblical boundaries and become who He has created us to be.



God created boundaries!

He created the universe with boundaries. That's why the stars hang where they are supposed to be, and other planets don't collide with us. That's why the oceans know their limits and the animals know where to live and survive.



He created us with physical boundaries. That's why our organs and muscles perform beneath our skin.

He created us with relational boundaries by giving us the 10 Commandments. These boundaries protect our relationship with Him and with each other.

Jesus tells us that the two greatest commandments are to Love God and Love others.

So how can we love others and set boundaries? Additionally, are we to have boundaries with God?

As we create and live out boundaries, the key filter in determining if a boundary is good is this:

“When we say Yes to something, we are saying No to something else.”

So, when we create a boundary, are we saying Yes to God's way and what He wants us to do while saying No to the ways of the world? Or on a scarier thought, is it saying Yes to the ways of the world and No to God's way?

## **Boundaries with the World?**

1 John 2:15-16

You should always be “in” the world (around unbelievers) as light, but now we must not be “of” this world (yoked to unbelievers). Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.

Last week Chase Otto gave a great example of this. After he gave his heart to Christ and decided to trust Him more, he was approached by his friends to do some things that wouldn't please God. Chase wanted to please God and created a boundary to not participate in what his friends were doing so he could protect his relationship with God.

What about you? What boundaries do you have in your life that are protecting your relationship with God?

Again, when we say Yes to one thing, we are saying No to something else. Do the friends in our lives draw us closer to Jesus or further away?

## **Boundaries with Friends?**

Jesus had boundaries with his friends, and they were all at different levels. Among his disciples, he seemed to even have sublevels of boundaries, meaning he kept most of the disciples in one relational area, kind of like a group of friends, like your Circle of Friends, but he allowed Peter, James, and John into a different, deeper area of his life.

Jesus even seemed to take it a step further and had boundaries around each individual relationship. When Peter wanted to know intimate knowledge about John, Jesus reinforced his boundaries and told Peter that he was crossing a line he was not to cross:

When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him [John]?” Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.” (John 21:21-22)

In other words, Jesus was reminding Peter to focus on himself and to leave the relationship between John and Jesus to John and Jesus. Peter was crossing a relational boundary and Jesus helped him return his focus to where it belonged; following Jesus in his own life.

Many times we will need to reinforce our boundaries with other people, like Jesus did here, to help them respect our lives and relationships.

### **What about boundaries as it relates to conflict in relationships?**

Jesus clearly tells us how to resolve conflict in Matthew 18: 15-17:

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. <sup>16</sup> But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’<sup>17</sup> If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”

The biblical boundary in resolving conflict is to follow these steps. If it gets resolved, the relationship is restored. If it doesn’t, it’s ok to unfriend, and not continue to invest in that level of relationship.

Jesus calls us to love people and yet not be a doormat.

There are sometimes relationships in our lives where the other person continues to take, take, and take and not give. It could be because of an issue or a challenge they are going through. You may feel guilty in saying no to a request they may ask when it’s the 8<sup>th</sup> time they have called you that week.

We are called to be like Jesus, BUT not Jesus. In seeking to help others we may be hurting them and NOT helping them to grow in their relationship with Jesus, in trusting Him in new ways. Boundaries not only help us to protect our relationship with Jesus and to be who He created us to be, but these boundaries will also help others grow, too.

When we say Yes to one thing, we say No to another.

## **Boundaries with Family?**

Proverbs 10:17 says “Whoever heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray.”

A boundary that we need to set with our children, regardless of age, is this; being a parent is primary and being a friend is secondary – we must not confuse the two. As you know, God created the role of a parent to be one of the most important roles in a child’s life. As parents, God created us to represent His heart to them in how we love and discipline them. We can love our children unconditionally, set boundaries, and discipline them for wrong behaviors. It is all about teaching them the “sow and reap” principle that Jesus taught us.

(Share Daughter & Camera Example)

Discipline and boundaries are critical in our roles as parents. If you’re a parent, I encourage you to sign up for our free parenting workshop called “Effective Discipline in a Defective World” on Tuesday March 3.

## **Boundaries in Marriage?**

Yes, there are boundaries in marriages. The basic boundaries of course are not dating other people, or spending all your free time with all your friends, or having an affair, etc. God also speaks of these boundaries throughout scripture

in the definition of marriage between a man and a woman and their roles together as one.

However, there are boundaries we learn as we grow in our relationship as husband or wife. There are simple ones like bathroom boundaries and there are deeper ones related to trust.

(Share examples with Gina)

### **What about abusive relationships?**

If you don't establish a boundary of what is acceptable, then you are allowing the other person to have that control. God did not create you to be abused and staying in an abusive relationship will never lead the abuser to Jesus unless there are boundaries. For example, if verbal abuse is this issue, it is completely biblical to say to your spouse, "If you don't get help and stop speaking to me that way, the kids and I will be leaving." It draws the line. This has worked to help save marriages and families. For some marriages where the boundary line was drawn and the abusing spouse didn't honor the boundary, the marriage ended, thus the children involved learned what should not be tolerated in a marriage relationship

### **What about our relationship with God?**

Last week, Gina and the youth shared the truth from John 15:14 where Jesus said:

"You are my friends if you do what I command."

So, the boundary line in our relationship with God is obedience to His word.

There is no boundary line with God, unless we establish one and don't let Him in to a part of our lives.

When we make a choice to not allow God into certain areas of our lives or make a decision to go against a boundary He has set, we create boundaries with Him that are bad.

The amazing thing is God's love has no boundaries. He is looking for people who are set apart to live Holy lives to do we must have boundaries set up to keep from willful sin and live our lives set apart and for God.

What area of your life are you living outside of God's boundaries?

God can restore this boundary and this area of your life. That's why He sent Jesus, who modeled how to live a life with no boundary, completely surrendered to the Father.

It's best described this way from something I read in my time with the Lord the other day:

"There is an amazing contrast between what took place in the Garden of Gethsemane and in the Garden of Eden. 'Not your way, but mine', was the essence of the response of Adam and Eve to God in the first garden. However, in the second garden, 'Not my way, but yours' was Jesus' prayer to the Father. Doing it God's way meant suffering and death. But it brought the redemption of the whole world."

Do you want victory today in this area of your life, where you have unfriended God and say to Him "yes your way and not my way?"

All He asks is that you remove the boundary, trust Him, live according to His Word and watch what He will do!

There may be some of you here today who have established a boundary with God and have never allowed Him into your heart or life. It's as easy as A,B,C to remove that boundary and begin a relationships with Him today.

Share the steps and pray.

**TOTAL WORDS: 2366**