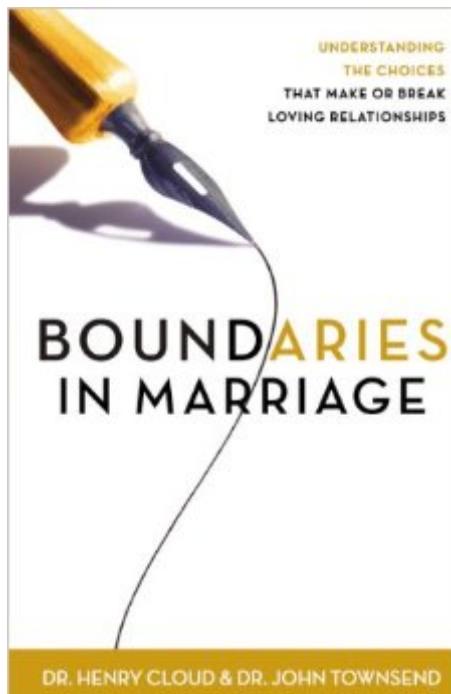


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# Boundaries In Marriage



## Synopsis

Learn when to say yes and when to say no--to your spouse and to others--to make the most of your marriage. Only when a husband and wife know and respect each other's needs, choices, and freedom can they give themselves freely and lovingly to one another. Boundaries are the property lines that define and protect husbands and wives as individuals. Once they are in place, a good marriage can become better, and a less-than-satisfying one can even be saved. Drs. Henry Cloud and John Townsend, counselors and authors of the award-winning best-seller *Boundaries*, show couples how to apply the 10 laws of boundaries that can make a real difference in relationships. They help husbands and wives understand the friction points or serious hurts and betrayals in their marriage and move beyond them to the mutual care, respect, affirmation, and intimacy they both long for. *Boundaries in Marriage* helps couples:

- Set and maintain personal boundaries and respect those of their spouse
- Establish values that form a godly structure and architecture for their marriage
- Protect their marriage from different kinds of intruders
- Work with a spouse who understands and values boundaries or work with one who doesn't

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This was the first book by Dr. Cloud and Dr. Townsend that I have read. Therefore, I can neither confirm nor deny another reviewer's statement that it is essentially a rehash of the original *Boundaries* book. Having not read any of the other *Boundaries* books yet, I found this one to be quite excellent. Whether or not you are a believer in Christ, this book can still be incredibly helpful if you're willing to read it with an open mind. It may even be helpful if you have a closed mind and you

don't even want it to be helpful. ;) The strength in it is that it is not a "How To" book. The authors realized that lists of surface actions to change don't change the heart. They focus on pointing out principles and revealing truth. They give plenty of examples and paint pictures of how certain actions make others feel. This helps you see beyond yourself, thus allowing you to interact with your spouse with greater grace and mercy. The changes in your actions are the result rather than the solution. Another thing I really like about this book is that it explains what submission and sacrifice in marriage really look like in the Bible and not in what the world believes that to look like. It explains that submission is always to be done in love and with the perspective of EVERYTHING that God has taught us through His Word. This means that submission and sacrifice do not mean giving up all your desires and doing everything your spouse tells you to do; it means upholding your responsibility to love your spouse no matter what (ie. loving them enough to help support the end of unhealthy behaviors and actions).

This book saved me in more ways than one. I love my husband, but he has some major character flaws that are deeply rooted, anger being the chiefest among them. I'm a passive, quiet, peace-loving person who doesn't handle confrontation or high-stimulus very well. So when my husband started swearing and yelling quite soon after being married, I was shocked. We both come from a very religious background that encourages marriage and respect in relationships, but somehow he had missed that part. I didn't know what to do, quite honestly. Initially, I would cry. He accused me of trying to manipulate him somehow by crying! So I learned to not show any emotion. When I wasn't shocked and scared of him, I tried to talk things out. I never got as emotional as he did, because I didn't think every problem required such huge reactions when we could just go straight to the problem-solving and skip the "woe is me/us" part. So he thought I was apathetic if I didn't get as emotional or dramatic. I won't get too specific, but to give you an idea of how irrational he gets when angry, he has threatened to leave our 3 year-old son at home while we go out because he didn't finish his dinner (don't worry, I was sane enough not to allow that!). He makes up the strangest punishments for our kids that just sound vengeful to me, childish, even, like something you would do to your kid-brother when you're 10, not something you would dish out to your child as their father. He yells at me when the house isn't perfectly clean, so I clean till it's shining, and he still yells! It makes no difference. He just overreacts when he's stressed out, regardless of how perfect I am or how hard I try to please him. My husband is also very tender and sensitive to others' feelings.

Two things right up front: I'm single and I'm an atheist. The reason I put those right up front is

because this is a book intended at married Christians. That said, it's a very very good book. I have no problem looking past the religious rhetoric and focusing instead at the heart of the message. This is very worthwhile reading for anyone. I have included some of my notes from this book so that you might get a feel for it, I highly recommend it (the only reason I gave it 4 stars was the fact that you have to look past so much dogma and rhetoric in order to see the beautiful underlying message). When two people are free to disagree, they are free to love. When they are not free to disagree, they live in fear and their love dies. Learning to be truthful and learning to receive the truth is part of the maturing process as an adult. It is the essence of intimacy in a relationship. Lacking this, we become slaves to one another's coercion and withholding of approval. Where there is no freedom to say no, there is slavery. A relationship must create freedom in order to survive- to the degree it creates freedom for both parties- to that degree it will continue to grow and thrive. Vice versa, to the degree a relationship enslaves and imposes, to that degree it is doomed as tool of destruction as opposing the joy and happiness of the partners in the relationship. Boundaries setting as a means of protecting each partner's freedom is a formula for success. Boundary setting as a means of restricting and censorship is a formula for slavery and dominance. Therefore, the key in learning proper boundaries lies in this: Boundaries can properly be defended, but they can never be asserted.

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