

SETTING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

A healthy boundary begins with a truthful *yes* or *no*.

'But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no' [a firm yes or no]; anything more than that comes from the evil one. [Lev 19:12; Num 30:2; Deut 23:21]'

— Matthew 5:37 (AMP) —

I'm glad you're here. Thanks for taking a few minutes to slow down with me each week.

A quick update: I've added a new **Newsletter Archive** to the website. I am still working on adding previous newsletters, but my goal is to make these weekly updates easier to revisit, share, and search as the library grows. If you missed a past issue or want to send one to someone else, you can find the archive here:

 [Visit the Newsletter Archive](#)

Last week, we started this boundary series by talking about what healthy boundaries are and what they aren't. Boundaries aren't walls, weapons, punishments, or attempts to control someone else. Healthy boundaries are lines of stewardship. They help us watch over what God has entrusted to us: our heart, peace, time, energy, body, relationships, calling, obedience, and even our *yes* and our *no*.

This week, let's take the next step: ***How do we begin setting healthy boundaries?***

And I think this is where many of us get tangled up, because we often assume setting a boundary begins with what we say to someone else. We picture the conversation, the conflict, the pushback, the explanation, or the possible reaction. Before we even know what's true, we're already rehearsing how someone else might respond to it.

But before a boundary is spoken outwardly, it has to become honest inwardly.

That's where healthy boundaries begin. Not with confrontation, a speech, or a demand. Not with a long explanation designed to make everyone understand and approve. A healthy boundary begins when we stop negotiating with fear long enough to *tell the truth* before God.

Jesus said it plainly:

“But let your statement be, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no’ [a firm yes or no]; anything more than that comes from the evil one.”

— Matthew 5:37 AMP

Jesus is calling us to integrity in our agreement. Our ***yes*** and our ***no*** should both be truthful. ***What we say externally should not be disconnected from what is true internally.***

This is hard for people who learned to survive by staying agreeable. If saying yes kept the peace, we said yes. If staying quiet prevented conflict, we stayed quiet. If overextending kept someone from being disappointed, angry, distant, or hurt, we overextended. Over time, our yes stopped being a truthful yes and became a survival strategy.

What we say externally should not be disconnected from what is true internally.

That kind of yes may sound kind on the outside, but it can create division inside the heart. We agree with our words while our body tightens, our peace disappears, our resentment grows, and our capacity quietly collapses. We keep telling people we're fine while everything in us is trying to tell the truth.

Setting a healthy boundary begins by listening to that truth without immediately dismissing it, spiritualizing it away, or shaming ourselves for having limits.

It means asking honest questions before we answer too quickly.

- Do I actually have capacity for this?
- Am I saying yes from love, or am I saying yes from guilt, fear, pressure, loneliness, attraction, obligation, or people-pleasing?
- Is this mine to carry, or am I taking responsibility for something that belongs to someone else?
- Am I being called to serve here, or am I trying to rescue, manage, prove, earn, or avoid?
- What would a truthful yes look like?
- What would a truthful no look like?

These questions bring the real issue into focus. A healthy boundary isn't just a reaction to someone else's behavior. It's a truthful recognition of what we're responsible for before God.

That's also why a boundary is different from a demand.

- A demand says, "*You must change so I can be okay.*"
- A boundary says, "*This is what I can participate in, and this is what I can't participate in.*"
- A demand tries to manage someone else's behavior.
- A boundary clarifies our own participation.
- A demand reaches across the line and tries to control the other person.
- A boundary stands on our side of the line and tells the truth about what we are able, willing, and responsible to carry.

This is where the [heart posture](#) gets exposed. Sometimes we call something a boundary when it's actually an attempt to control an outcome. And sometimes we avoid setting a real boundary because we're afraid someone will accuse us of being controlling. But healthy boundaries are not about managing another person's choices. ***They're about living truthfully with our own.***

A healthy boundary may sound like:

- *"I care about you, but I'm not able to keep having this conversation when it becomes disrespectful."*
- *"I can help with this, but I can't take responsibility for the whole thing."*
- *"I'm not available for that."*
- *"I need time to think before I answer."*
- *"I'm willing to talk about this, but I'm not willing to be yelled at."*
- *"I forgive you, but trust will need to be rebuilt over time."*

None of those statements require us to attack, accuse, overexplain, or control. They simply clarify what is true.

And that's often where the [fear](#) rises.

For many of us, setting a boundary feels dangerous. It threatens the old survival agreement that said, *"Stay pleasing, stay available, stay useful, stay quiet, stay needed, and maybe you won't be [rejected](#)."*

But healing requires us to tell the truth. Not harshly. Not carelessly. Not pridefully. But truthfully.

A healthy boundary doesn't:

- Need to be dramatic to be firm.
- Need to be angry to be honest.
- Need to be cold to be clear.

Sometimes the most mature boundary is the quietest one because it comes from clarity instead of chaos.

This week, the invitation isn't to go looking for a fight or force a conversation before you're ready. The invitation is to become honest with yourself and before God about where your **yes** and **no** have become divided.

Where have you been agreeing outwardly while resisting inwardly?

Where have you confused love with unlimited availability?

Where have you said yes because you were afraid of what a truthful no might cost?

That's where setting healthy boundaries begins.

- Not with control or punishment.
- Not with self-protection pretending to be wisdom.
- It begins with truthful stewardship.

A healthy boundary begins when we have the courage to say, *"Lord, show me what is mine, show me what is not, and teach me to let my yes be yes and my no be no."*

Next week, we'll talk about upholding healthy boundaries, because setting the boundary is one thing. Staying aligned when pressure comes is where the deeper work often begins.

If something is on your heart, if you're wrestling with something, or if you just want to say hi, I'd appreciate hearing from you.

 [Contact Form](#) or reply to this email

This Week's Articles:

No new articles were published this week.

I'm continuing this short newsletter arc because healthy boundaries touch so many parts of healing and spiritual formation. They reveal where fear has been leading us, where self-abandonment has become familiar, and where God may be inviting us back into truth, peace, courage, and faithful stewardship.

If you haven't already, you can check out the [Guided Series](#) or [Anchored Reflections](#) on the site. More is coming soon.

Anchored Breathwork

Anchor Breathing (4–4–4) for Grounded Presence

Purpose: To steady your body, quiet the fear response, and create enough internal space to listen before you answer.

Posture: Sit comfortably with your feet grounded. Relax your shoulders. Open your hands in your lap as a physical reminder that you don't have to hold everything so tightly.

1. **Inhale** through your nose for 4 seconds.

Quiet cue: *"Here I am..."*

2. **Hold** for 4 seconds

Quiet cue: *"Lord, I am listening..."*

3. **Exhale** slowly for 4 seconds.

Quiet cue: *"Lead me in truth."*

Repeat for 5–7 cycles.

Pro Tip: If the counts feel too long, shorten the rhythm slightly. That could look like 3–2–5, or even 3–5 with no hold. The goal is regulation, not pressure. A steady rhythm helps your body settle and gives your nervous system a simple pattern to follow.

This Week's Practice

Before you set a boundary, take a few minutes to write through these four questions:

What's happening?

Name the situation honestly without exaggerating or minimizing.

What's it costing me?

Pay attention to peace, resentment, exhaustion, distraction, fear, or disconnection.

What's actually mine to carry?

Separate your responsibility from someone else's responsibility.

What truthful yes or no do I need to name?

Write one simple sentence that reflects clarity without accusation.

Example: *"I care about you, but I'm not able to keep saying yes to this."*

Closing Prayer

Abba,

teach me to tell the truth without fear and to love without self-abandonment. Help me recognize where my yes and no have become divided. Give me wisdom to know what's mine to carry, humility to release what isn't, and courage to speak with clarity instead of control. Lead me in truth, peace, and faithful stewardship.

Hallelujah. Amen.

You Matter...

Every newsletter, article, and Anchored Reflection begins with a real question or burden. If something is pressing on your heart, send it my way. Each week I choose a focus for the newsletter, an article, or a reflection. What you share could be the catalyst for someone else's breakthrough. I would also love your feedback on recent articles.

 [Share What's on Your Heart](#)

Save or Share This Newsletter


I'm creating PDF versions of these newsletters so they're easier to save, revisit, and share. If this week's email encouraged you or brought something into focus, you can download the PDF version from the archive here:

 [PDF Newsletter Archive](#)

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If this newsletter encouraged you, challenged you, or gave you something worth reflecting on, I'd love to have you join the list.

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