

SUMMARY

Last week we learned to read the flags. Visible danger is easy to avoid, and it is the hidden currents we have to learn to recognize. When power and control show up together, that is a red flag. But not everything is abuse. Plenty of conflict is about preferences: the thermostat, the right way to load the dishwasher, etc. This week we asked a deeper question: how do we build healthy boundaries that protect what matters most?

The principle we discussed comes from Proverbs 4:23: what God entrusted to you is worth guarding. You are the lifeguard of your own beach. In Mark 1, Jesus left before dawn to pray, and when everyone came looking for Him, He said, "Let us go somewhere else." He loved everyone, but he did not give everyone the same access. In practice, that means knowing what is yours to carry and holding the line with grace. Expect pushback. People who benefited from your lack of boundaries may not celebrate your new ones. Sometimes what has changed is not your love, it is their access. Like Mary at the feet of Jesus, a "no" to one one thing can be a "yes" to what matters most.

MAIN TAKEAWAY

Healthy boundaries are not about pushing people away. They are about knowing what God has entrusted to you and being willing to guard it. The deeper question is not "Where should I draw the line?" but "What has God entrusted to me that I'm responsible to protect?"

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Some of the topics in this discussion may be personal or sensitive. **Be thoughtful about what you share, listen without judgment, and remember that it's not our job to fix each other.** Create space for people to share without feeling pressured to disclose more than they're comfortable with. If you or someone you know is in an unhealthy or unsafe relationship, please seek professional help or contact your campus pastor (first name@salty.org). If you're working through this guide on your own and need support, contact **Salty Church at office@salty.org**, and we can help connect you with someone who can help.

ICE BREAKER

What is the preference battle in your house or office? The thermostat, the dishwasher, toilet paper over or under, or what "leaving in five minutes" really means?

LOOK BACK

- We talked about the difference between preference and power. Think of a recent disagreement at home or work. What made it feel safe, or unsafe, to disagree?
- "You are the lifeguard of your own beach." What stands out to you about this phrase when it comes to boundaries?

LOOK UP

- Read [Proverbs 4:23](#). What does it look like to guard your heart?
- Read [Mark 1:35-38](#). Everyone was looking for Jesus, but He chose to go somewhere else. How did knowing His purpose help Him say no?
- Read [Galatians 6:2-5](#). Verse 2 says to carry each other's burdens, and verse 5 says each one should carry their own load. How do you tell the difference between a burden to help with and a load that belongs to someone else?
- Read [Romans 12:18](#). You can only control what is yours to control. What are you trying to control that you need to let go of and trust God with?

LOOK AHEAD

- What am I carrying that isn't mine to carry, and have I handed any of my own burden to someone else?
- When I say no, how do the people closest to me respond? And how do I respond when someone says no to me?

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Pray Proverbs 4:23 each day this week: "God, help me guard my heart, for everything I do flows from it."

RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- *The Emotionally Destructive Relationship* - Leslie Vernick
- *Is it Me? Making Sense of Your Confusing Marriage* - Natalie Hoffman
- *Adult Children of Emotionally Immature Parents* - Lindsay C. Gibson
- Making Sense of Your Worth 8 week series - visit [Salty.org](#) and look under Events
- [TheHotline.org](#) - Confidential support, information, and resources for crisis.