



- Mature leaders, grounded in the Word of God, and sensitive to the Spirit must step forward in these situations.

### 5. Who starts the Reconciliation process?

- Either party can start the process. God is not restricted to any one person willing to start the process.
- However, generally, it will be most successful when the person with the greatest power or authority seeks reconciliation. This means pastors, elders, fathers, parents, or other leaders need to step up.

### 6. Reconciliation is a process

It often takes time. Not everyone is willing to humble their hearts, listen, acknowledge, and own their part.

- Trust is earned.
  - Be prepared to have to earn lost trust.
- Trust means taking a risk.
  - If we demand a risk-free process, we will never get to biblical reconciliation.
- God is “Jehovah Rapha” the healing God. Healing is ultimately a gift from God to both parties.

*“My son, keep your father’s commandment, and forsake not your mother’s teaching... For the commandments a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life.”*

*Proverbs 6:20,23*

Boundaries are not defined by us as individuals or by any philosophical ideas. Instead, they come from God Himself as revealed by the Word of God. He calls us to use them for our personal and inter-personal standards of conduct.

When these standards are violated, then we need to release/receive forgiveness and seek reconciliation. When they are violated carelessly or deliberately, then we need to respond as God’s word instructs.

### When brothers and sisters ignore boundaries

*“<sup>13</sup>As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. <sup>14</sup>If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. <sup>15</sup>Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.”*

*2 Thessalonians 3:13-15*

Some people violate boundaries – not from evil intent, but because they are immature and careless with obedience to God’s word. It wounds, re-wounds, and continues to cause problems. Paul says to set additional boundaries...

- warn them.
- Limit our contact with them.
- love them and seek God’s blessing for them.

*Remember... they are family!*

*“Good fences make good neighbours”*

### When people deliberately/sinfully cross boundaries... set tighter boundaries

*“<sup>10</sup>As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him,*

*<sup>11</sup>knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.” Titus 3:10-11*

These people are different. They cross boundaries deliberately. Paul tells Titus (and all spiritual leaders) to watch out for them and protect the Church from these people. Warn them. Protect those being attacked. Remove these evil people from fellowship.

### “Leave them alone...” (even greater boundaries)

*<sup>12</sup>Then the disciples came and said to Him, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?”*

*<sup>13</sup>He answered, “Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. <sup>14</sup>Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.” Matthew 15:12-14*

The Pharisees – the corrupt spiritual leaders – were abusing and mistreating God’s people with teachings that were not from the Word of God. Following them and their teaching leads you into bad places. Leave them alone. Generally, they will be leaders who...

- Lack spiritual discernment and understanding.
- Are offended by corrective teaching.
- Have hidden sin, bondages, and control issues.
- Cling to leadership as their right/calling.

### Special case... When we have no choice

*<sup>2</sup>“The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, <sup>3</sup>so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. Matthew 23:2-3*

*“We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” <sup>29</sup>But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:28-29*

Some situations exist where we have no way out from under leaders who oppress and violate boundaries. When they speak God’s word truthfully – we follow. Sometimes, we live in situations where the rules protect violators – and we are forced to live under those conditions. Like Jesus we may suffer, but choose to demonstrate love, forgiveness, grace and shine the light of Jesus to a broken world.

## Relational Boundaries

### Ensuring Integrity in relationships

*“Good fences make good neighbours...”*

**Forgive...** even if others choose not to forgive.

**Seek reconciliation...** even if others refuse to acknowledge the need or choose to live with offence.

So **how do we set boundaries** in our lives and relationships so that others cannot **wound** us or **re-wound** us unnecessarily?

The Bible gives us some clear instruction on how to do this.

### God’s Command -

*“Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path”*  
*Psalms 119:105*