



## Establishing Moral Boundaries

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In a world that has been ravaged by the sexual revolution, I want to share a special burden with women. It is this: I believe that we, as Christian women, can do much to establish a climate in which men are motivated to be morally pure. At the same time, we can be the instrument of causing any man to fall morally.

Many years ago, I was sobered by the passage in Proverbs that speaks of the woman with an immoral heart. It says, “Many strong men have been slain by her” (Proverbs 7:26, KJV). Think of it: many men—many strong men—destroyed by a woman who is not morally pure. What incredible influence and responsibility we have as Christian women!

I pray that God will make me wise, prudent, and discreet in my relationships with men. I ask God to make me an encourager and a blessing to the men with whom I am in contact, to use my life to build them up in their faith.

I believe that you share in that prayerful desire.

### *Principles of Edifying Behavior*

How can our behavior be morally edifying rather than morally destructive? Let me offer three key truths.

1. Moral purity begins in the heart. A woman with a pure heart will love others with the love of Christ—a love that is self-denying rather than self-seeking. This love will result in her living in a moral manner.

2. What we feed into our minds ultimately will determine our behavior. Those who desire to be morally pure will choose to think on things that are pure. And then pure living will follow pure thinking.

3. We are to be on guard against defrauding another (1 Thessalonians 4:6). To defraud someone is to create expectations that cannot righteously be fulfilled. Women can defraud men with immodest dress, flirtatious behavior, or flattering words.

Because it is so easy to defraud another morally, we have a responsibility to consider our behavior and put boundaries in place. The goal is to respect the marriages and morals of both ourselves and others.

### *Avoiding Moral Compromise*

The apostle Paul made it clear that the will of God for every believer is that we be morally pure, that we abstain from every form of immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). In a time

when adultery and divorce are epidemic, we have an obligation to do everything we can to strengthen marriages and to avoid anything that might weaken them.

As a single woman, I try to invest in the wives and marriages of the men with whom I serve. I have also established boundaries in my working and social relationships with married men that may seem extreme to some. But I have spent many hours helping people pick up the broken pieces of marriages shattered through infidelity, and so I don't want to do anything that would in any way contribute to such pain.

Married women, likewise, should focus on building their own marriages. As they love and respect their own husbands, and keep their focus on their own marriage and home, they will be less likely to have any opportunity, much less a desire, to tempt another man to do wrong. As married women mix with other men at church and in the community, they can put boundaries on these relationships through awareness of how they dress, what they say, and where they go with other men.

Wise women will avoid any setting, contact, or behavior that could potentially make themselves or others vulnerable to the slightest moral compromise. In this way they will not only prevent suffering but also experience the unsurpassed joy of moral purity.

### ***The Blessings of Boundaries***

A commitment to moral purity is essential to experiencing the fullness of blessing that God intends for us. Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8, ESV).

When we set and keep biblical boundaries of moral purity, the blessings that result are like ripples of water from a stone thrown into a pond. It is a commitment that wonderfully affects our own health and spiritual welfare, our relationships, our homes, and our culture.

### ***Making it personal***

How is your own moral purity at risk? How might you be endangering your purity and the purity of the men you know? Spend time this week praying, thinking, and talking with other godly women about how you can establish moral boundaries for yourself.