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Discovery: Excerpt: Dr. Henry Cloud: It's really the fruit of self-control, because the Bible tells all of us that we should have self-control. If someone doesn't take responsibility for their life when we don't, there's collateral damage in relation. End of John Fuller's passage: Self-control is something we don't talk much about in the context of marriage, but it's such an important spiritual truth. And this is Dr. Henry Cloud, who, along with Dr. John Townsend, is best known for writing a series of books about borders. We'll hear a lot more from Drs. Cloud and Townsend about today's Focus on Family. Thank you for joining us; Your host is focus president and author Jim Daly and I'm John Fuller. Jim Daley: John, this is a crucial message for our culture today, because in our society everything is going well, we see the tragic results of the hurtful commitments in marriage and the unbridled passion. People who live by their own standards, rather than morality, drive decision-making. We need self-control more than ever, and I think that's obvious, but even we Christians, maybe as Christians, we need that. And why? So that the world can see the difference God makes in our lives! The Bible tells us that self-control is proof that the Holy Spirit works in our hearts, and we must be a faithful witness in how we communicate and interact. We've mentioned it before, this is the 40th anniversary of Focus on the Family. We are featuring some of our favorite guests and themes that have been so helpful and encouraging for families over the decades and John Townsend and Henry Cloud are certainly among the best guests we've ever had in the program. John: I will have to agree; they have been great friends of this ministry since the late 1980s and are first-class psychologists, leadership experts and best-selling authors. Jim: Not to mention believers in Christ! John: This is a key component of who they are and what they do—in fact, it's the basis of what they learn from Scripture, especially when they relate to the context of marriage and family relationships. A few years ago, John and Henry joined us at a marriage conference in Colorado; And we've explored some themes from their book, Boundaries in Marriage, here is more than this presentation today on Focus on the Family. Body: Jim: Dr Townsend and Dr Cloud, let's start there. Uh... how can it be outlined ... what are the limits and how can they be set? Basically, the border is property. If you're thinking about your house, you... You have a fence around it, and then you have a neighbor. So all a border does is tell us where one person ends and another begins. Now that you're talking about getting married... this concept is in the universe that you know, God is one God, There are three personalities with different identities. Marriage is something like that. Jim: Do... you have an example? Where would you... in marriage, where does the border fall apart? Dr. John Townsend: A lot of times it breaks down when a person tries to take responsibility or control something in someone else's line. You know, when you go to Genesis, he quotes you... this part about, you know, we are one flesh, it's called flesh. It is called one flesh; it doesn't say one soul. There are two people. You have to start over. We are one flesh in a marital relationship, but these are two people. When one person's soul enters another's soul, you have a problem. E.g... Um... one person um ... there are some sad emotions. They... they have a struggle, a struggle with children, or whatever, and the other person says, Well, you know, I know that husbands never do that now. But if the husbands (laughs) did this and try to give advice and try to fix it, you know, what should the husband do to respect a woman's boundaries is to say, you know, How can I help you? Let me listen to you. Unlike you, you have a problem called sad emotions. Let me fix them. He's trying to control something God didn't want. 'So when couples really love each other and feel like it's ok to have these two separate properties, they can connect. They can love each other, support each other, but each of them is responsible for their lives. This is the fruit of self-control, because the Bible tells all of us that we must have self-control. If someone doesn't take responsibility for their life when we don't, there's collateral damage in relation. If we control ourselves, we control our feelings, our attitude, our behavior, our choices, then the damage does not fall over the fence, in our property in the people we love. And if you think about it, you know, in the Garden of Eden, then we stopped taking responsibility. God comes to them and tells them, What's going on here? Adam says, This is the woman you gave me. Jim: Um-hmm. - No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, that's the snake, right? And then he takes that as a criticism, and instead of bringing back something better, he... And... and they are in it right now. And this basic human tendency not to support each other and take responsibility for, if you have hurt my feelings, to give something better than and to take responsibility, to control ourselves and to love, then this is the only way to turn it around. Jim: Let's play a part because... Honestly, Gene and I can get into this, and it's so natural, and I don't know if it's our human condition, that we tend to fall down. What I mean- Henry: That's right. -We're escalating the problem instead of escalating, I don't know why it's like human beings. Henry: We experience it - Jim: But I'll do it with Jean. - You control me, don't you? You're... if you say something means, then what to do? Well, you're me off. That in itself is a problem. How can you make me do something? If I'm in control in the end, I'm going to do something about the fact that if I'm mature enough and we're all on the road somewhere, we're going to give something better than the anger I'd blame you for. Jim: Okay, so my husband says something that's negative. How should I respond in a healthy way? How should this husband react to de-escalation, take on high ground to create the border? Henry: So you have to do something for her. You can't do that. She eavesdropped and said: How could you forget something like that...? - That's right. Henry:... Right? What's happening right now is you're going to feel aglie, right? I don't like it. But that's how you take responsibility for your feelings. So if you feel hurt, well mature, taking responsibility will be something like: You know what? I'd like to talk about it, but the way you said it was a little painful. Jim: Well, I... You know, I don't care how you feel when I say it. I want to make sure you hear what I'm saying. Henry: Well... Because half the time you don't hear what I'm saying. Henry: All right. I... I heard what you said, and I want to talk to you. If you want to talk about this first, we can talk about it first. - No, no, no, no, no, no, but at some point I want to talk about how you say things, because we have to talk about it. Jim: Now ... Henry: But I'd be happy to talk about ... dry cleaning or anything. Jim: Now keeping this kind of cool cool-looking creature is very difficult when someone - Henry: Right. - He's attacking you. Henry: It's hard, but it's the standard of the New Testament. And... Where do you find this illustration? Henry: You see it all over the New Testament—you leave things like anger, malice, anger, and bitterness, and all that. Forgiving one another as Christ has forgiven you. John T.: Don't bring back evil for evil. Henry: Don't come back evil for evil on and on. It is a high standard for us to have the limits of self-control. But it's still standard. Doesn't mean we're always going to make it, does it? But the goal we have to work for. Jim: Let's ... Let me read a letter we received in of the family. We changed the names here, but you can answer that question. Tish's been married for four years. When she was pregnant with her second child, her husband Scott made contact via Facebook with a woman he knew from church years ago. Their relationship is moved from Facebook to texting in a physical connection. Uh... Now three months since Tish knew about her husband's affair, he's still not sure what he wants. Uh... Scott tells Tish he loves her, but he's not in love with her. What's he going to do? John T.: Let's go back to the principles. She's in a nightmare, isn't she? Her husband is unfaithful, and he's not even sure he wants to come back. Her life is upside down. One of the things we find, for example, in ... in marriages where a husband has been unfaithful and is what we call ambivalent, I'm not sure if I want to go in, rule No.1 is that you can't live with me. Because if you stay with me and get the benefits of being with me, my warmth and structure, and our family, and you also have someone else here, you live in what they call ... the fantasy of the affair, where you can have your excitement and stability and your ... all of this. And in no way can he come to terms with it, not only for the sake of the children and for the good of the children, but also for his own good. So the first frontier should be: Well, until you decide to get married and stay with me, you'll have to live somewhere else and understand it. What is the typical reaction in this situation when he or she puts that limit down? What do you see normally in the practice of counseling that ends in the next step? What- John T.: The-Jim: - it happens in the couple? - Scott's side of things? Jim: Or ... Both, actually, Tish and Scott. John T.: Well, now, keep in mind that this is not done in isolation. What the New Testament says, all this must be done in the community. The boundaries of marriage work when there is a community that supports a righteous and healthy life, right? So this is done with all the right accountability structures and support structures and all that. So, what happens - let me play two tapes. But then she, counselors and elders finally say that... if he's not with her, you're going to hurt everybody. And he has to leave and get an apartment somewhere. And then Scott has to experience what it's like to live with fantasy and not live with reality. And then he starts to feel lost and he starts to get back to reality and the ether, you know, goes and has to make some choices about what he really wants on the deepest level. And many times if she sticks to it and says: Really, I love you, but I'm not ... you don't come back until you're all in. He comes and repents and changes and discovers what he did in the first place and went ... makes some good That's the good tape. What about the bad tape? He's struggling. He won't leave. Um... it is surrendered because it feels guilty and they have been doing this for many, many years and it is always a big mess. So, the clarity of boundaries ... God's truth is always so clear. The clarity of the boundaries and after with them, so ... and here's the kicker, she, Tricia, has to make Scott responsible for his choices, and the consequences of this election make him grow up. That's how God works. Look at Hebrews chapter 12, and the author says: Discipline hurts and is painful right now, but for those who are trained by it, it bears the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Tish must create a structure that allows Scott to feel the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Jim: And in that ... - Go on. Henry: One ... One of the things you see about it is that it's always a process. God tells us to start one by one, as in Matthew 18. You know something's wrong. You go to the guy on one. You're trying to talk. If they are wise, they listen; they take ownership. They repent. But he says if they don't, then he says a stronger border is needed. In fact, he even uses the words we have to link this behavior, doesn't he? In a body where two or more of you are gathered. If they don't listen to you, what will he say? It doesn't say give up. It says take two or three more, and there's a stronger limit. And that's where you're going to bring in the people who have power with him, you know, people who... that he cares. And then you start to surround him. And if that doesn't work, you're going to bring in a bigger group, right? But at the end of the day, as John said, you keep burning up to the last, the biggest frontier we have is the separation limit. And this loss, I hope, will lead him, you know, to a place of divine sorrow. Jim: So, in this context, you're really ... The goal is to isolate the viola so that they can taste only their fantasy and have no taste of reality. I think a lot of people would ask themselves that. Henry, yes. What do you see in your experience in terms of how long it should take? What is normal reaction time? John T.: Well, there are three or four factors that will determine that. It will be how serious the question is, the heavier, more real, more sin, it will take longer. - Scott's hero. Some people have quite a mature character and they really got confused, but they repent faster. Some people have very, very... narcissistic character and it takes longer if it is ... He denies it, and he really has a point. This is going to take longer. Besides, who lets him weigh him while he's there? Jim: Hmm. John T.: Yes, who is- Henry: Who makes this harder? John T.: another factor is to make it easier for him not to hit the bottom. Another factor will be, where are the resources of the community around? He's an isolated guy who's a hermit and doesn't have any friends? It's hard to get to him. Look, we can't see each other if you're acting like this against Tish. That adds a few more things. So, the more resources and the better it is done and ... and the more people around it and the less it allows, the faster it becomes. Henry: One of the things we know about this process is that when you have someone with a character problem, well, talk to them more, Prithchi is very clear that if you talk to what's called a fool, someone who's not like feedback, she says, stop talking. Don't face ridicule so you don't get offended. So, we know it's not going to happen anymore. But the Bible tells us that borders and consequences will work. Here's what we know. Restrictions and consequences don't work 100 percent of the time. But in scenarios where nothing else works, they're the only thing that works. John T.: You're guaranteed, if you don't use them, nothing's going to work. John F.: Hmm. I'm John Fuller and this is Focus on family with Jim Daley and today we listen to Dr Henry Cloud and John Townsend as they share principles from their book, Boundaries in Marriage. If you want to know more about the book or our guests, or get a CD or download our conversation, stop focusonthefamily.com/radio or call 1-800-A-FAMILY. And now, here's more than that marriage conference where Dr. Claude and Townsend talked. Jim: Let's move on to something a little harder then. In the culture we're in, it's very sexual. Um... and even in Christian marriage, infidelity occurs, which seems much higher than what a generation has experienced in past decades. With how this establishment of the border ... Let's just say trust is broken. Uh... next steps, let's say the two are engaged and they want to do it. What are the ways in which this should be played in terms of boundaries? I don't know if I can trust him again? What is normal time and what does this look like to restore confidence in this relationship? John T.: Well, the Bible has a lot to say about who's reliable. It's not just about apologizing and saying I'm sorry about that. It's repented. The word in the New Testament means to change. So, it has to be, I'm in the marriage, I love you, it's very difficult and I love you, but I don't trust you. And always remember in marriages, or any relationship, is always free. There's a duty to love, but trust is earned. You never trust someone who's never won the trust. So, her position is to be healthy and connected, to be open and to listen and to receive all the help she can get. But now it's time... It's time for him to watch. He has a job because he has to prove that he is now a man who deserves trust. And that usually involves things like not only having good healthy, biblical standards of sexual sobriety, you know, keeping dazzles and keeping away from people who are wrong and influences that are wrong, if it's an addiction to pornography, all of it. But that's not all. But also, he needs to talk to her deeply about the influence he had on her. I need to know how it affects you. And she should have a day in court where she can tell him what it feels like and ... What... how it demoralized her. Henry: For days. John T.: Ah. Henry: Days and days. John T.: Days and days. It's a process. John T.: And a good husband, instead of saying: Look, I've changed. Don't you see all the changes I've made? That's the worst thing you can say. A good husband will say: All I have to do is listen to how I have affected you, and you can tell me at any time as much as you want, because that's what it takes to show you that I care. Jim: Hmm. John T.: And she has to be honest about what she did and how she devastated. She doesn't know good from evil, whether she's attractive or she's a good person. He must be man enough to hear it. We call this psychobabble containing. She's got to keep it as long as she needs it. And a third thing he needs to do is work on the root. Something drove him to these activities. It is usually said that it is not just a kind ... an act he did, but it was because he was angry, lonely, stressed or trying to punish her or because he wanted to enter a fantasy life. He needs to find a good counselor. And he has to say: I need to understand what this is about. What made me do this because I have a bad fruit in my life. And the Bible says that good trees have good fruits, and bad trees have bad fruits. And so to dig it up. So, she knows it, it will never happen again, because not only was he responsible for the process and responsible for sexual sobriety with her, but he was also responsible for his roots, so she knows that he is a different transformed person. I'm a transformed man. And... and Jim, many times what ... what he will do is say: I am sorry; I repent and change, I will be different and I will trust in me. Well? Okay, but I think it's very important for her to look at biblical criteria, a set of things that the Bible says builds hope and builds trust. And in the writings, I mean, it's all there. How do we know he has a good future? If development, there is a future and hope for them. So, is this person now in some kind of verifiable process of spiritual growth that has a community that has proven results, right? Is he going to a sexual addiction group? Is he going to see a counselor? Does he have a partner? Is he seeing a psychiatrist? Whatever it is, something with proven results that independently surrenders to this process. Is that the next thing he's going to get? You know, is he learning? He didn't know how to communicate. Now she sees him trying to learn new skills. He opens up about the things he didn't bring her, but to get on with a lover. Is he self-authorized to do so? Or should he push it? You can tell someone who's really recovering because you don't have to arrange for him to go to the counselor or go to his group. You can't tell them away. Let's play golf or bowl, they say: Oh man, I can't. If I did, I'd miss my band. John T.: You can't stop them. And then you want to see a change. And if you have a list you're looking for, then it shouldn't be in that bicta water of trusting him or not? There are some real criteria to measure it. From.

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