



MAIN POINT

Healthy relationships have healthy boundaries.

MAIN VERSE

Proverbs 4:23

TEACHING GOAL

Students will understand that boundaries are wise decisions made ahead of time to honor God and protect people emotionally, spiritually, and physically—and that boundaries help relationships stay healthy rather than ruining them.

HOOK (2 minutes): WHY DO WE HAVE BOUNDARIES?

- Let me ask you a question:
 - Why do we have boundaries in life?
- Think about it:
 - Guardrails on a road
 - Fences around a yard
 - Rules in a game
- None of those exist to ruin things. They exist to keep things from going wrong.
 - No one looks at a guardrail and says, “Wow! This road would be way more fun without that.”
- Boundaries aren’t about limiting freedom. They’re about protecting what matters most.

SCRIPTURE (2 MINUTES): GUARD YOUR HEART

- READ PROVERBS 4:23
 - This verse warns us to protect our hearts.
 - In the Bible, your heart doesn’t just mean your emotions.
 - It’s
 - Your thoughts
 - Your desires
 - Your decisions
- God is basically saying: “Pay close attention to what you let shape your thoughts, desires, and decisions, because it will shape everything else.”
- Boundaries are one of the ways God helps us guard our hearts.

TENSION (5 MINUTES): WHY WE DON'T ALWAYS LIKE BOUNDARIES

- But what does this have to do with relationships?
 - The truth is, especially in middle school, boundaries can feel like they limit our fun.
 - If we're honest, sometimes we don't want boundaries in our relationships because we don't want to...
 - Feel left out
 - Hurt someone's feelings
 - Look weird
 - Say no
 - So instead of making decisions in advance, we just react in the moment.
 - And when feelings get involved, boundaries can feel awkward or unnecessary.
- **NOTE ON DATING:**
 - Each week, we're talking about every relationship you have, but I realize that some of you are at a stage where you're either interested in or you are dating someone. So let me say this about dating and crushes...
 - Here's what matters:
 - If boundaries aren't decided before emotions take over, we usually make choices we never planned to make in the first place.
 - This is an area that can lead to so much pain and heartbreak.
 - When it comes to boundaries, in dating specifically, we have to view them as a good thing and not a bad thing.
 - Boundaries are a way of saying, "I care too much about you and my relationship with God to be careless."
 - Healthy boundaries make healthy relationships possible.

APPLICATION (4-5 minutes): WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES REALLY?

- Here's a simple definition to remember:
 - Boundaries are decisions we make ahead of time that help us honor God and protect people... including ourselves.
- Putting boundaries in place looks like:
 - Deciding how you talk to people
 - Deciding what conversations you'll participate in
 - Deciding what situations you'll avoid
 - Deciding when to say no – even when it's uncomfortable.
- Boundaries help us live out what we talked about last week: letting Jesus shape **EVERY** relationship.
 - Boundaries don't make you mean.
 - Boundaries don't make you boring.
 - They help us make wise choices that make Jesus proud.

LAND THE POINT (1 minute):

- God cares about your heart.
- And because He cares about your heart, He invites you to guard it.
- Healthy relationships don't happen by accident. They happen when we choose healthy boundaries.
