

# LENTEN

## devotionals

### SECOND MONDAY OF LENT MARCH 1, 2021

Today is the second week of Lent.

Take a moment to pause and  
breath in and out slowly.

Intentionally.

Rest in and welcome God's  
grace-filled presence.

Dr. Henry Cloud writes:

"Boundaries help us keep the good in and the bad out. Setting boundaries inevitably involves taking responsibility for your choices. You are the one who makes them. You are the one who must live with their consequences. And you are the one who may be keeping yourself from making the choices to be happy with. We must own our own thoughts and clarify distorted thinking."

Henry Cloud, *Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No, to Take Control of Your Life*

What captures your attention from this insight into boundaries from Dr. Henry Cloud?

†

"Do you love me? Do you really love me?" Have you ever asked this question to God? Why?

When someone tells us not to do something why do we tend to take that as a challenge? Do you ever take up that sort of challenge with God? Consider that perspective as we reflect on this week's guiding passage from Genesis. **Read today's Scripture.**

*God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so...*

*And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."*

Genesis 1:28-30; 2:16-17

How well did you hear God's freedom, love and generosity towards flourishing in this passage?

Blessed them...be fruitful...  
increase...rule over...I give you....  
You are free.

†

Did you notice more God's boundary, but didn't see it as an expression of love and freedom? Or as Henry Cloud phrased a way to "keep the good in and the bad out."

Reflect on your own tendencies. Are you more inclined to see God's boundaries as limiting, or as circles of commitment enabling us to experience true freedom by keeping the good in and the bad out?

Read today's Scripture again.

As you read, ask Jesus to open your life and heart to embrace God's boundaries as life giving and a sign of God's loving circle of commitment for you.

In these final moments today, talk to Jesus—as you would to a good friend over coffee—about where you find yourself in today's passage. Are you embracing or fighting God's given boundaries. Why?

Lord Jesus, search us,  
and know our hearts;  
test us and know  
our anxious thoughts.  
Point out in us anything  
that offends you,  
and lead us along  
the path of everlasting life.

Amen.