

## Boundary Disputes

Recent media coverage of the Israeli peace negotiations reminds us that the issues of boundary disputes have been around for centuries. Boundary disputes are one of the most difficult of all negotiations.

*Adapted from the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's remarks after his meeting May 19 with President Obama*

*ISRAEL wants peace. I want peace. What we all want is a peace that will be genuine, that will hold, that will endure. A peace based on illusions will crash eventually on the rocks of Middle Eastern reality; the only peace that will endure is one that is based on reality, on unshakable facts. For there to be peace, the Palestinians will have to accept some realities. The first is that, while Israel is prepared to make generous compromises for peace, it cannot go back to the 1967 lines -- because these lines are indefensible; because they don't take into account demographic changes that have taken place over the last 44 years.*

We men too have fallen into many difficulties because of poorly defined and indefensible personal boundaries. Some of us never learned to say no to our parents and still feel controlled and manipulated by them. Some of us have trouble saying "no" in general. Others have gotten stuck saying "no" and have never learned to yield and say "yes." We've told ourselves we're strong enough to sacrifice for someone else, or that we have no right to our yes or no, or we've simply chosen to deny our personal responsibility in making appropriate choices.

We often put off making decisions while waiting for a better offer; we find ourselves wary of giving an opinion lest the opposing side be offended; or we commit and then double-book depending on the latest status. It's exhausting. In our hectic society, it's almost as if we are incapable of focusing on one thing long enough to give it serious attention and consideration before we accept or decline.

As we mature into the men God has destined us to become, God begins to show us some unshakable facts and the realities of our limits and encourages us to stand for them. Relationships with brothers in the faith and "spiritual fathers" prove very helpful, as we seek counsel from them in setting appropriate boundaries. There's much to be said for being a person of integrity and doing what you say you're going to do. There's even more to be said, however, for being a person who carefully considers decisions with God's input, seeks the counsel of mature believers, and sticks to those decisions once they're made. God freely offers us wisdom and guidance for our lives. As such, we have the ability to receive His input in making decisions. When we do, we can make commitments with confidence, knowing that He has already seen what future roadblocks may arise.

*"Let your 'Yes' be your yes and your 'No,' no, or you will be condemned" ([James 5:12](#))*

<sup>22</sup>*The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;  
his mercies never come to an end;*  
<sup>23</sup>*they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.*      *Lamentations 3:22-23 (ESV)*