



CCN WEEKLY SOLUTIONS SERIES  
THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 8, 2007



## **Relational Freedom, One Step at a Time, 1: Guilt Free Living**

**Featuring**

**Dr. John Townsend**

*Psychologist*

*Best-selling co-author of Boundaries series,*

*author of Hiding from Love*

Visit CCN on the web at [www.ccn.tv](http://www.ccn.tv)

## I. Freedom in relationships

We want good relationships, but we've got to be free to do that

Every good relationship has both connection and freedom

But if anything can kill love, connection, and freedom, it's guilt

## II. What is guilt?

Guilt is self-condemnation due to either a real or perceived transgression

These judging/attacking messages have nothing to do with learning and growing

Non-working ways we "solve" the problem of guilt:

- Self-punishment
- Becoming careful/hiding
- Despair

Some people beat themselves up so much you can't compliment them

You can't disagree with guilt

*...in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them...*

—Romans 2:15

## III. Where does guilt come from?

Guilt does not come from God

Guilt is a state, not a feeling

The feeling of guilt often has nothing to do with the state of guilt

The Holy Spirit's job is to convict: 'convince or persuade'

*When [the Counselor] comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment...*

—John 16:8

Guilt comes from the Devil: 'the accuser' (Revelations 2)

The more condemned we feel, the more alienated we will feel from love, connection, and light

Guilt comes from our conscience

Conscience = moral compass

Conscience is imperfect

Conscience is as good as the information put into it

Three types of consciences:

- Weak conscience (1 Corinthians 8): rigid, rule-bound
- Seared conscience (1 Timothy 4): it doesn't function
- Clear conscience (1 Peter 3): it functions right

The solution: Godly sorrow—which isn't guilt

Guilt and godly sorrow differ in...

- Time (past vs. future)
- Subject (me vs. relationship)
- Fruit (condemnation vs. reconciliation)

<sup>8</sup>I am not sorry that I sent that severe letter to you... <sup>9</sup>not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways. It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way. <sup>10</sup>For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.  
—2 Corinthians 7:8-9

#### IV. Steps and tips

- Get new experiences into your conscience

New voices talking to you about your failings

What does a caring, loving person do when you fail?

You can't fix your guilty conscience all by yourself

- Ask God for help

God's reality is greater than my guilt feelings

*Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything.*  
—1 John 3:20

- Move into a season of protest versus the harsh feelings

“That was wrong, how I was treated”

- Experience correction in gentleness

“I'll do better next time”

## Next week on *Solutions*: “Sorry is Not Enough”

### Resources:

#### BOOKS:

##### *Hiding from Love*

By Dr. John Townsend  
www.zondervan.com

##### *How People Grow*

By Drs. Henry Cloud and John  
Townsend  
www.zondervan.com

##### *Loving People* (to appear)

By Dr. John Townsend

**CLOUD-TOWNSEND SOLUTIONS FOR LIFE** 

**FREE** online video solutions 24/7!

As part of our online video community you can ask Dr. Cloud & Dr. Townsend your questions and get a video response!

Go to **CloudTownsend.com** and discover:

- relevant video solutions
- videos of the week
- engaging discussion groups
- and much more!



Sponsored In Part By:



**NewLife Ministries**

New Life Ministries is a fully-equipped resource for the treatment of mental and spiritual health issues.

[www.newlife.com](http://www.newlife.com)

### Contact Information:

#### Dr. John Townsend

Cloud-Townsend Resources  
3176 Pullman Street, Suite 105  
Costa Mesa, California 92626  
**Phone:** 800-676-4673  
**Web:** www.cloudtownsend.com

#### Church Communication Network

PO Box 1718  
Mt. View, CA 94042  
**Phone:** 800-321-6781  
**Fax:** 650-745-0660  
**Email:** ccninfo@ccnonline.net  
**Web:** www.ccn.tv

Visit CCN on the web at [www.ccn.tv](http://www.ccn.tv)