**Character Discernment For Dummies, Part 1**

# Featuring

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

## Character discernment

There will always be toxic people around us: that’s reality

*24“The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. 25But that night as the workers slept, his enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat, then slipped*

*26*

A safe person influences you to be the person you were

*away.*

*When the crop began to grow*

designed to be

Every relationship moves you toward light or darkness An unsafe person moves you away from the person you were

designed by God to be

This isn’t about blaming people

## The unsafe person

You find problems in connection

When you open up, bad things happen You find problems in responsibility

*and produce grain, the weeds also*

*grew. 27The farmer’s workers went to him and said, ‘Sir, the field where you planted that good seed is full of weeds! Where did they come from?’ 28“‘An enemy has done this!’ the*

*farmer exclaimed. ‘Should we pull out the weeds?’ they asked. 29‘No,’ he replied, ‘you’ll uproot the wheat if you do. 30Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I*

*will tell the harvesters to sort out the weeds, tie them into bundles, and burn them, and to put the wheat in the*

*barn.’”*

—Matthew 13:24-30

Unsafe people don’t take ownership of their effect on others

We euphemize people: we excuse bad things because there is something we want in them Two aspects that make a person unsafe:

* A life issue: something that is out of growth
* Externalization: they’re not accountable for the issue Blame, rationalization, minimization—not owning

Ownership crosses the bridge from unsafe to safe

## Why we choose the wrong people

* + Fear of isolation
	+ Defensive hope
	+ Filling in blanks

! person plus ! person doesn’t make a whole person

* + Rescue: relating from strength down to weakness

## What to do?

* + Connect to the righteous Small groups

Experiences with the good so that the bad feels bad

* + Ask questions

Questions bring things into light

* + Get beyond the sizzle Get to character

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**Next week on *Solutions*: “Character Discernment for Dummies, Part 2”**

**BOOKS:**

### *Loving People*

By Dr. John Townsend [www.cloudtownsend.com](http://www.cloudtownsend.com/)

***Who’s Pushing Your Buttons?*** By Dr. John Townsend [www.cloudtownsend.com](http://www.cloudtownsend.com/)

### *Hiding from Love*

By Dr. John Townsend [www.cloudtownsend.com](http://www.cloudtownsend.com/)

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