



CCN WEEKLY SOLUTIONS SERIES  
THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2007



# **Secrets of the Good Life, #5: Feeling Good**

**Featuring**

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## I. What is mercy about?

Mercy matters to us, and bears fruit in our lives forever

Dispensing mercy: When you refrain from imposing justice

Someone has the right to come at you for what you've done—and refrains from it

Mercy is the emotion that drives forgiveness

The purpose of mercy:

Mercy induces safety for change—we feel permission to change

We don't come by dispensing mercy naturally

Kids aren't born with the spiritual attributes: the attributes take work

<sup>2</sup>and he began to teach them, saying: ...  
<sup>6</sup>“**Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_, for they shall obtain \_\_\_\_\_.**”  
 —Matthew 5:2, 6

*But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, <sup>5</sup> that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead.*  
 —Ephesians 2:4-5a

## II. Requirements to have mercy:

- Realize that mercy trumps judgment

Give up the demand for justice, which can ruin every relationship you have

*... it is to one's glory to overlook an offense.*  
 —Proverbs 19:11b

Moral entrapments in a saint/sinner relationship

- Experience the need beneath the offense

Merciful people understand that the offender is hurting and can use grace

This is hard work! That's love—and it produces good fruit

- Receive mercy

This requires honesty: you can't receive mercy till you admit who you are

Codependents aren't merciful: mercy and giving license aren't the same thing

The codependent is full of fear

Fear of losing love, someone else's anger, or hurting someone

The result of mercy is light, but the result of license is darkness

### III. Obstacles to mercy

Unhealed hurt [4125]

If you're still in pain, it's hard to be merciful—you're still in the self-protection stage

Self-judgment: not kind to ourselves

If someone else messes up, it symbolizes *our* failure, and we judge it

Inability to experience failure

If things have always been easy for you, it may be hard to feel compassion

### IV. Steps and tips

- Look at the situation

- One-time offense

- A pattern but with real remorse

Think the way that Jesus taught us to think

- Begin to experience your needs in relationship—get out of the pride game

You can't will your way into mercy: you have to be loved into it, so put yourself in that position

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## Next week on *Solutions*: “Heart so Pure”

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### Resources:

#### BOOKS:

##### *Hiding from Love*

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

##### *How People Grow*

By Drs. Henry Cloud and John  
Townsend  
[www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com)

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

By Dr. John Townsend

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