

PREVENTING EMOTIONAL MELTDOWN
Overcoming Emotions that Destroy

GOD'S SOLUTION FOR MAN'S GUILT

By Jim Craddock

*Preventing Emotional Meltdown:
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God's Solution for Man's Guilt*
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*Never underestimate what God can do through
the human heart fully committed to Him.*

INTRODUCTION TO EMOTIONS

Life was not supposed to be the way it is today. In the beginning, emotions were simply a reflection of the indwelling presence of God. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were to be spared of experiencing the terrible, debilitating affects of what I call “renegade emotions.” Their emotion spectrum consisted of *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control* (Galatians 5:22-23), and many more that demonstrated the dynamic image of God within.

Renegade emotions did not come with God, they came with the Fall. They are a product of a nature now turned against God and permeated with an exceedingly powerful and evil force called sin. Not only did this turn Adam and Eve’s world upside down, but turned their emotions inside out. Instead of being master over their emotions, they became the victims of them.

So powerful are these emotions, man is no longer ruled by his reason, but rather by his emotions. Renegade emotions do not enhance a person’s life, they blackmail and destroy. Don’t take my word for it, just ask those who are suffering from the terrible blackness of despair that depression brings, or the excruciating pain that runaway anxieties produce.

We are guided and dominated by our emotions rather than our reason.

Satan delights in marginalizing the Christian through destructive emotional patterns. He did his best in trying to disable the great English preacher, Charles Hadden Spurgeon through depression. He attempted the same with Amy Carmichael, God’s worker for the children of India. No one is immune to these insidious emotions.

Of course, Satan wasted no time in developing an extensive, pervasive system to address the very problems he himself had created. To marginalize anyone from trusting God to heal and deliver them from these devastating renegade emotions, we find man attempting to do through secular means that which God does through spiritual means.

GOD’S THERAPIES THE WORLD MISSED!

The Prophet Jeremiah wrote these poignant words of God, “*Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?*” (8:22a).

It is important to emphasize doctors are necessary when illnesses strike. When I have my reoccurring kidney stone attacks, I don’t call the local shrink; I head to the hospital for a bucket full of morphine. I might add God has gifted this nation with the most astounding medical science in history. God doesn’t disparage or condemn a Christian for going to a doctor or a counselor. Being a physician or a professional practitioner is both a high calling and an equally high responsibility.

Now many Christians also feel it is wrong to take medication, especially for the renegade emotions. They think it shows a lack of faith or else they feel it is just plain wrong. This is not true. There are times that medication is necessary. If I didn’t put drops in my eyes three times a

day, I would be totally blind. Without my high blood pressure medication, I would be flirting with a stroke.

So having said this, I would also say with equal firmness, we cannot allow the medical field to replace our faith in the sufficiency of Christ and His Word. That is a very real danger. In our day and age, we only begin to rush to God in prayer when the physician says there is no hope.

Believe me, there is no better therapy than the Spirit of God working through the Word of God, so the Son of God can do in our lives what cannot be done otherwise. The Bible deals with the renegade emotions and has done so before psychology or psychiatry ever came into existence.

God heals today! Often through the expertise of a doctor and just as often through an act of faith, He is our Balm of Gilead. As we trust the Spirit of God to work through a physician, so we must also trust the Spirit of God to work as only He can in the healing of our spirit, soul, and body.

EMOTIONS AN OVERVIEW

As most of us have experienced, emotions can be messy, debilitating, and dangerous. What can we do when our emotions run wild and threaten to overwhelm us? Worse, what happens when we lose control of our emotions and they begin to dominate us? These and other questions we will address in our *Preventing Emotional Meltdown: Overcoming Emotions that Destroy* series which are “*God’s Solution for Man’s Anger*,” “*God’s Solution for Man’s Anxiety*,” “*God’s Solution for Man’s Depression*,” “*God’s Solution for Man’s Fear*,” and “*God’s Solution for Man’s Guilt*.” You can obtain these books at www.HisTruthTransforms.org/Store.

The spectrum of human emotions is like a kaleidoscope, many colored and ever changing. We live in an emotionally charged world – emotions, not reason, govern our behavior. Billions of dollars are spent yearly by the marketing industry in its quest to manipulate our emotions. The medical field has undergone a paradigm change reflecting the demands for a quick fix and a feel good life. This has forced doctors to deal with symptoms rather than causes, with emotions rather than facts.

THE NATURE OF EMOTIONS

God wired us as emotional creatures. Unfortunately, our first parents’ short-circuited the system. Before Adam pulled his foolish mistake, emotions were positive, helpful, edifying, and satisfying.

As previously mentioned, after the Fall, a whole host of negative and harmful emotions arose. These renegade emotions are aggressively destructive such as anger, anxiety, depression, fear, guilt, and hatred. These emotions have the ability to blackmail us and hold us captive. Either we conquer them or they could conquer us!

The Bible gives us an account of the first case of renegade emotions - guilt, fear, and dread. Adam, along with Eve, believed the devil’s lies as God’s truth and God’s truth as the devil’s lies and in so doing got snake-bit (Genesis 3). They knew they had transgressed God’s explicit commands and were, in fact, guilty. Because they were guilty, they, for the first time ever, experienced fear – they were afraid of God. It was fear that caused them to hide from God, their

love of God had become the dread of God, for they feared the punishment that was to be meted out.

Basically, emotions tell us what we feel is right or what we feel is wrong, a case of pleasure vs. pain. Emotions are the means that both body and mind communicate to us. They are messengers. This is why it is so important to ask ourselves why do we feel the way we feel? There is a reason we feel the way we do. However, it is also important to realize our negative emotions can be organic in nature. In other words, emotions might be telling us there is a physical problem.

Emotions are messengers.

CASE HISTORIES

A wife came in and wanted me to tell her how she could have her husband's head on a platter. From what she related to me, he was worthless, useless, baseless, the meanest, orneriest, and most miserable human being ever to set foot on planet earth.

I asked her when the last time she had a medical checkup. Never! I suggested she go to her family doctor and make certain everything was in order. It wasn't. Six months later she called and thanked me for saving her marriage. "But I didn't do anything," I protested. "You sent me to a doctor and he discovered I had a very serious case of blood-sugar imbalance. It has changed my life," she went on to say, "I have the most wonderful husband in the world!"

A husband brought his frazzled wife in. She looked like she had grabbed ahold of a hot wire. Her hair all but stood straight up. Here was a bomb with a very short fuse. I think every emotion of the human spectrum were at overload. She was afraid she was crazy. He was convinced she was! It turned out though that it wasn't her nerves, but her thyroid. The thyroid was fixed and she was fixed.

A doctor's wife came in. "Don't tell me I am entering into early menopause," she declared. "I have checked with two of our doctor friends and they assure me I am not. What do you think my problem is," she asked. "Early menopause," I replied. Explosion!!! Later, she called and admitted I was right. Her doctor friends were just trying to be polite. When hormones go crazy so does the person.

Often haywire emotions are the result of an organic problem, one that needs medical attention. I have met with people who were convinced they were going insane only to find that there was an imbalance or hormone deficiency. Post-partum depression is frequent, blood disorders usually show themselves through emotional upheaval. Don't rush to judgment.

So, how do we keep our emotions in check, and what do we do when we can't or won't? The sense of losing control of our emotions is devastating.

OUR HELPER

Remember, you cannot conquer your emotions yourself, you must put the Spirit of God to work and allow Him, through you, to overcome your renegade emotions. We have the Holy Spirit to

help us express our emotions in a healthy way: in a way that frees us from bondage to our renegade emotions and allows us to honor and express God's heart and character.

Our emotions are not to be the authority of our lives. We are to recognize our renegade emotions as indicators to connect to the Father's heart. He will cause us to examine where the Holy Spirit is urging us to appropriate His truth in bringing about healing from the chaos of damaging emotions.

It is God who replaces our renegade emotions with the Spirit-filled emotions that are *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control* (Galatians 5:22-23), and many more that demonstrate the dynamic image of God.

May what you learn move you to a closer intimacy to Jehovah Rapha, the One who heals, because Jesus Christ has, indeed, given us everything for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

God bless you as you undertake a wonderful adventure.

GOD'S SOLUTION TO MAN'S GUILT

Guilt is history's stepchild. From the moment our first parents hid from God to the most modern of our 21st Century man, guilt has been man's constant companion. As guilt devastated Adam and Eve, so it devastates us today – guilt is a universal conundrum that defies human explanation apart from the Word of God.

Man lives in a guilt-driven world, a world where most live out their lives in quiet desperation. As long as man lives apart from God, guilt will be his soul-mate, the result of a conscience seared by sin.

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” Romans 3:23.

“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one” Psalm 14:1-3.

THE NATURE OF GUILT

Guilt is to law what strawberries are to shortcake. Without law, there would be no guilt. However, it is obvious as Paul reveals in his letter to the Romans, the human race consists of law-prone people (Romans 2:15). In other words, we are wired for order and stability and will do anything to avoid anarchy within or without. This propensity for law is a God-given element and exists in all of us. Although meant as a blessing, law has serious and potentially deadly consequences, namely the guilt >fear>dread cycle.

Law comes from but two sources and two sources only, God and man. One produces a true or factual guilt, which is beneficial and the other produces a false or irrational guilt, which is harmful. The question arises can a person acknowledge guilt without feeling guilty? The answer, of course, is yes.

True guilt is based on fact, that is, the Word of God and is part of the mental process. Acknowledging behavior that contradicts the Word of God or the character of God is what the Bible refers to as confession. As the Holy Spirit reveals the contradiction in our lives, we acknowledge it to be true, and turn from wrong behavior to right behavior.

There is no requirement for an emotional response, no demand by God that one feel guilty – rather, what is expected is for one to admit, agree with God, confess, and acknowledge what has been done. Emotions only confuse the issue.

Man, that's us by the way, is the other major player in producing law-driven guilt. We face a hydra-headed monster when it comes to laws created or imposed. From the moment we are old enough to begin to understand we operate under a system of laws. In fact, we are inundated with laws: laws from parents, teachers, peers, society, cultural, and as we mature, we are faced with laws superimposed upon us by those in authority over us. Add to these the self-imposed laws we

see, we face a bewildering array of laws – all of which are capable of creating intense emotional guilt.

As we grow up, we learn within the home what acceptable or unacceptable behavior is. Most families have standards and limits, which are necessary and important. Not only is a child faced with the standards of the home, there is the lifestyle of the parents. What they say or don't say, what they do or don't do, the circumstances that befall the family all form what I call the **guideposts of the past**. These guideposts are indelibly imprinted on the mind, where they often lie dormant until such a time they are called into use.

These guideposts, although hidden, are very powerful. They provide background knowledge as we face new experiences. Without such guideposts, a person would be adrift when faced with new experiences or knowledge. How we handle new situations depends largely on what we learned from the past – our guideposts!

We cannot understand new experiences
without background knowledge.

Unfortunately, although necessary, as a young person begins to build his or her own life, their guideposts can be a major source of irrational guilt, especially if what they are doing contradicts these guideposts. Current behavior that contravenes learned behavior produces a contradiction which often results in feelings of guilt.

For example, many parents use negative standards to try to produce positive results. As I mentioned earlier, young girls are often taught that sex outside of marriage is wrong, dirty, and could produce the worst of all scenarios – pregnancy apart from marriage. This is drummed into the child year after year; until such a time comes that she is now the bride.

Unfortunately, a twenty minute ceremony cannot erase the years of brainwashing and many a young bride has experienced the awful feelings of guilt when they consummate the marriage. Many a marriage has been destroyed because of this.

Don't get me wrong. I am opposed, very much so, to sex outside of marriage. Such behavior is repugnant to God and is a sin. Christian mores concerning sex have been trashed so thoroughly that little thought today is given to whether premarital sex is wrong, even by Christians.

Another major source of law and standards come from the expectations of parents, teachers, and peers. These can be unspoken, but nevertheless very real and very powerful. My mother never had the opportunity to go to college, although this was her heart's desire. She determined that if she couldn't go, her children would. It was an unwritten and unspoken rule that we three boys would go to college – no if ands or buts. And to college we went.

Many children have difficulty in accepting or meeting the standards set at home, so they create a system within the family structure to gain strokes, which might not otherwise come their way. If this system is successful, and most often it is, then it is carried over into adulthood, where it

might or might not work – usually the latter. This system is woven into the fabric of the guideposts and account for the propensity to create in our generation what we grew up in the previous one.

We tend to create in our generation a replica
of what we grew up in the previous one.

This means both good and bad qualities are passed on. It is a well-known fact abused children tend to abuse their children in turn. Children of divorced parents are more apt to divorce themselves. Patterns observed in childhood become lodged in a person's mind as **basic habit patterns**, which reproduce themselves at a corresponding age.

For example, I had a wife and mother of a six-year old girl come to me for help. Her husband had become an alcoholic. As she related her story, she mentioned her father had also become an alcoholic when she was six. She determined never to marry a man that drank, which she did. Unfortunately though, when her daughter turned six the husband became an alcoholic. Inexplicable, certainly! Baffling, absolutely! But I have seen similar occurrences over the years on many occasions. Equally puzzling was that the emotion she expressed most was guilt.

If we add to this mix the laws that society places on us and the demands and expectations of our boss, family, friends, and others, then you have all the potential right there for a major guilt trip. I have asked dozens of husbands this question, "What emotion does your wife most often express toward you?" The answer invariably is, "displeasure." This simply means someone's expectations are not being met.

The final source is the major source – you and me! The laws and standards we impose upon ourselves are staggering. We create our own system that actually forms an infrastructure that governs our lives – it becomes our lifestyle. Unfortunately, the walls we create through the self-created system for our protection become the barrier that imprisons us.

Man is a strange mix. God gave us a reason through which we could rationally approach life, yet, we choose to live and to be guided by our emotions. Because of the pleasure > pain spectrum, we have made our emotions our final authority. This has had tragic consequences because it allows us to be blackmailed by the more painful of the renegade emotions.

The unfortunate fact is our emotions overrule our reason and we respond to any transgression emotionally – that is, irrationally. We feel guilt often, even though we might not even recognize the source of our guilt. Law and guilt are dancing partners, the trouble is we cannot tell the difference between the partners – they are one and same as far as we are concerned.

This creates a consistent source of confusion. Since guilt is always expressed as a felt-emotion, it matters little to us what made us feel guilt, we just know we are experiencing the pain of guilt. This is most unfortunate, because true guilt is not a feeling but a fact. True guilt comes when we transgress God's laws, when we behave contrary to God's character.

God doesn't require us to feel guilty, nowhere does he demand that, ever! He does, however, require we acknowledge wrong and sinful behavior as a fact. To add emotional or irrational guilt to what is already a fact simply muddies up the water. Nothing pleases Satan more than for Christians to respond to the pain of guilt rather than to the fact of their sin. I want to stress again, God does not demand that we feel guilty.

Consequently, there is true or factual guilt that comes from the Holy Spirit. This kind of guilt draws us to the Cross and alleviates the fact of our sin. Jesus is our Advocate and is quick to assure us that our sin and guilt have been addressed by His death.

Where does the pain in guilt come from? Guilt in and of itself is rather benign, so there must be something else. There is, for law introduces other elements into the equation. You see, for guilt to be effective, it must be a penalty; otherwise it would be more like a flaccid balloon. It is the fear of what the punishment will be that causes the pain of guilt – to be specific, the pain of guilt is dread – dread of the penalty to be imposed.

UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF GUILT

It doesn't take a genius to figure out why a person feels guilt. Guilt comes from being guilty – guilty of something. Guilt means we have transgressed something, somewhere - somehow we have gone beyond the pale and because we have we face the onslaught of guilt. Strange but true, a person can be saturated with guilt and have no comprehension why he or she feels guilty.

Guilt is the painful emotional response triggered when absolutes are transgressed in some manner. We shall discover the absolutes are violated and when violated the emotional response can be overwhelming. I will make two statements at this point, which we will discuss in more detail later.

1. First, a person feels guilty for one reason and one reason only – they are guilty!
2. Second, nowhere in the Bible does God require we feel guilty, nowhere!

People experience guilt for one reason and one reason only – they are guilty – of something!

You might ask, “What do you know about guilt? You are not a professional counselor?” No, I am not a professional counselor, if you mean by being a psychologist, I am a biblical counselor without apology and have been one for four decades. As far as guilt goes, I am the guy who invented it.

I remember reading a magazine article where the actor Lee Marvin said, “I have felt guilt since I was an inch long.” That I could identify with. I think I embraced guilt shortly after my birth.

Guilt is no respecter of persons; it has no racial bias; it cares not if one is black, yellow, brown, or white; it is all the same with guilt. Somewhere I read the statement made many years ago if the mental profession could alleviate guilt we could empty out the hospital beds.

I endured many years of a guilt-ridden life. I woke up feeling guilt and I went to bed feeling guilty. I had to relive every moment of my day to make certain I hadn't done something wrong, and sure enough I usually found something. Guilt was an all-consuming monster. It robbed me of my joy in the Lord.

Is there then hope for the guilty? Absolutely! When we understand the dynamics of guilt from a biblical perspective, we will see God has provided both the means and the power to conquer this malignant renegade emotion.

Guilt is guilt and most of us have little concern for its origin, but want to escape it. Yet, it is important to find the cause since we are already experiencing the affect. Our emotions are not sophisticated enough to differentiate between the various sources of guilt, so we must trust external sources rather than internal ones.

Obviously, our textbook will be the Bible, for it is there God gives both the formula and process of overcoming guilt. The Bible reveals two types of guilt: emotional or irrational guilt and factual or true guilt.

The former has to do with the emotions; the latter has to do with the mind. The trouble is the pain of emotional guilt overwhelms factual guilt, so we all tend to look at guilt through a single prism. God doesn't require us to feel guilty, but we do!

Global guilt is common to all people regardless of culture. God put eternity in the hearts of men. (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Eternity is always related to God. The Bible tells us God put in man a God-consciousness that cannot be filled by anything but God. In addition, the innate sense of law was also given. In short, there was a need to know God and serve Him.

Guilt is a great motivator, but a most unfortunate one. People will go to great lengths to alleviate emotional pain. Because emotional pain is very real pain, there are those who capitalize on it – evangelists are great at this – getting people to respond, not so much to the message but to assuage their feelings of guilt.

Because guilt is so extensive, so pandemic to our society, it would do us well to understand the dynamics of this vicious, but little understood renegade emotion. As we proceed with our study we must remember God is God of our emotions as well as everything else. God already knows our problems; His main concern is empowering us to overcome them.

God is solution oriented not problem oriented.

We begin with two extremely important concepts: conscience and absolutes.

CONSCIENCE

One of the great tragedies of our Christian education is so little attention is given to one of the most important truths of the Bible, that of conscience. One cannot understand, let alone overcome guilt without some basic understanding of conscience. For further study, I suggest my

books, *Man, The Incomparable Creation* and *Angels in Conflict, A Study of The Conscience* and they can be secured by going to www.HisTruthTransforms.org/Store.

Most Christians harbor a very childlike knowledge of conscience expressed by a little angel on one shoulder and a little devil on the other. This more expresses the Greek concept of conscience rather than the New Testament concept. One of the most amazing facts of New Testament truth is the Apostle Paul created an entirely new concept of conscience. Conscience is an incredible truth and demands our study.

Unfortunately though, without some idea, some understanding of conscience, we will continue blindly from guilt trip to guilt trip. I would stress learning about the conscience is not a luxury, but a necessity. One very revealing commentary on contemporary thinking of conscience is found in the comic strip, "Garfield."

In one strip, Garfield is speaking to his conscience and he asks, "Conscience what do you do?" His conscience answers, "I make you feel bad about the things that make you feel good." Garfield replies, "How sad." The conscience replies, "It's a living." The next morning's strip has Garfield's alarm clock ringing and Garfield's conscience is telling him to get up. Garfield tells his conscience to go away, he doesn't need it. The conscience replies, "Watch out or I will get my big brother." Garfield asks, "Who is that?" The conscience replies, "Guilt! Be on the jogging track in five minutes sucker."

Cute but conscience is so much more than that. Certainly, conscience does reveal good and bad, right and wrong, guilt or innocence, but if we stop with that, we will have nothing more than a warped sense of conscience. What we need to understand for this study, what is it that triggers conscience activity?

ABSOLUTES

"A society that embraces relativism and multiculturalism is hard pressed to produce a hero. If every view of the world is equally acceptable, there can be no absolute standards of bravery, sacrifice, patriotism, faith, truth, fairness, fidelity, and honor. And without absolutes, there can be no heroes."

In our study of guilt, we are looking at the dynamics that make guilt guilt. We see in part the role of conscience in guilt, but there is a point of reference to which conscience responds. It is to this point of reference I would now draw our attention. It is what I call absolutes.

Now, when I speak of an absolute, I speak of something that is final, something complete, something authoritative, something mandatory. I will go as far to say man is a bundle of absolutes living in a world of absolutes. Now, I realize this flies in the face of those who claim everything is relative. Perhaps, if one chooses to ignore or deny God.

God by His very nature is absolute, immutable. He is everything we have defined above and more. Not only is He absolute, He creates absolutes. This is why I can claim man is an absolute and lives by absolutes.

This does not mean that events, circumstances, history do not change. They do, but the one thing that doesn't change is man's basic nature – it remains the same until or unless it is changed by the power of Christ.

In our lives, absolutes become the point of reference that determines, how we think, how we act, how we feel. And now get this for it is very important, absolutes become the point of reference for the conscience. The conscience responds to the absolutes we create. Without absolutes, the conscience cannot perform, not efficiently by any means.

Now then, there is one point of reference, an absolute that never changes. It is this, God created in every person a conscience. Earlier I referred you to Ecclesiastes 3:11a which says, *“He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart.”*

What Solomon is referring to here, is God created in man a God-consciousness (the heart of conscience) that demands satisfaction. What this means is there is a hole in the heart of every person bigger than the whole outdoors – a vacuum as it were, that only God can fill.

The Apostle Paul reiterates this in Romans 1:19-20, *“They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God”* (New Living Translation).

This passage has great ramifications. It means:

1. Man is incurably religious.
2. Man is forever seeking God in his own way.
3. Man must worship in some manner.
4. God is the ultimate absolute.
5. Man is constantly comparing his behavior with the God he does not know.

Paul reveals in this passage man's great dilemma, his accountability to God. Paul is saying it doesn't take a genius to observe God's creation and not know there is a God. Man is conscious of God, and with the consciousness comes moral accountability.

Man's great dilemma is his accountability to God.

THE GREAT GAME OF REINVENTING GOD

The only way man can escape this moral liability is to change his perception of God, in other words, to create a god in his own image that fits well within his zone of comfortableness. A god he need not fear. Without the fear of punishment or retribution man feels free to do whatever he wishes to do, not matter how evil. The Psalmist says,

“Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts. They have no fear of God at all. In their blind conceit, they cannot see how wicked they really are. Everything they say is crooked and deceitful. They refuse to act wisely or do good” Psalm 36:1-3, NLT.

The Apostle Paul, when he is in Athens, runs into this hypocrisy when he sees a shrine dedicated to the Unknown God. Paul already shows that God has revealed Himself through nature, but to these arrogant philosophers, a god who is unknowable is a god who cannot demand accountability.

Man plays this Great Game of remaking God, and in the process he himself takes on the characteristics of the idol he has created (Psalm 115:2-8 and Psalm 135:15-18). And the game man played in antiquity is the same game played today, just on a larger and drastic way. Man flaunts his depravity and inhumanity because he has no fear of God.

Because man cannot know God apart from God revealing himself, he is doomed to feel guilt in some measure. Man creates God after his own image, and depending on what that image contains will be the degree of guilt man feels. Most often, social mores, cultural influences, and nationalistic tendencies replace God in a non-believers mind-set.

“For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their heart, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them” Romans 2:14-15.

Paul is saying the Gentiles, those who do not know God, have the Law of God written in their hearts. How? The conscience! He says those without the Law act better than those who have the Law. People instinctively know right from wrong. Of course, this is convoluted by social mores and accepted behavior within the particular society, but the conscience is at work.

What this means is every person born in this world has an absolute point of reference which is God Himself! In other words, a conscience judges a person's behavior in contrast to God's character – even though they might not have a true or complete knowledge of God.

However, following the Fall, man began to create his own absolutes, absolutes that had to do more with him than God. Absolutes became man-centered rather than God-centered.

The conscience is bound by the absolutes we create.

Whether one accepts it or not, everyone is a bundle of absolutes. Each absolute has a purpose, mainly to make one feel good or to accomplish something considered to be good. Every child wants to be considered a good little boy or girl, and it is in that pursuit they get their positive strokes. The absolute, of course, is to be a good child (absolute = good child). To be one it is necessary to create sub-absolutes. An example of sub-absolutes for a child would be as follows:

1. I need to please my parents.
2. I need to make good grades.
3. I must make my bed.
4. I must obey my parents.
5. I must behave myself around company.
6. I must be honest.
7. I must love my brothers and/or sisters.
8. I must eat everything on my plate (a happy plate).
9. I must clean my room.

I don't know a kid alive who jumps up and down at having a set of standards and limits. But although they are imposed on the child, they still make up an absolute. So in actual practice when one of these sub-absolutes is broken, the conscience reacts by making us feel badly or guilty.

We could classify these 9 laws as describing the absolute of being a good family citizen. Childhood absolutes are established by the standards and limits set up by the parents. Every family should establish them, they become part of the tradition of the family, but the parents must be extremely careful in administering these standards. If a child feels he or she is loved because they are the child of the parent, fine, well and good. But if the child feels that parental acceptance only comes through the keeping of the standards that causes the child to establish a rigid absolute which will cause problems later on.

For a child who is not in touch with his or her emotions and doesn't understand what is happening, the reaction to the pain is often expressed in negative behavioral patterns. They know something is wrong, but they do not know how to express it. The conscience is responding to their absolutes and raising havoc within.

As a person grows older, their absolutes become far more sophisticated, yet are basically designed to ensure safety and security. Since most people have identity problems which fosters low esteem, their absolutes not only reflect their desired safety and security net, but form an infrastructure that allows them to control situations, circumstances, and events.

Because absolutes are hard to define, most people express them in the form of self-imposed laws. Here is another list that I have constantly observed. The list could be endless.

1. I want to be liked.
2. Sex is wrong and dirty before marriage.
3. I must not doubt God.
4. I should go to church.
5. It is wrong to drink.
6. I must be a good person.
7. I must please my parents.
8. I must be accepted by my friends and peers.
9. I must not be like my mother/father.
10. I must have a boyfriend/girlfriend.

Because we are law-prone people as Paul points out, we turn our absolutes into definable expressions, in other words, self-imposed laws. Those laws that are more moral in nature take on a greater significance than those that are more generic. Each law we create, we give a certain degree of weight to it. Some laws we consider far more important than others. Cut it any way you like, the laws we create can become dynamite.

These self-imposed laws are much like breathing, we are not necessarily aware of them until something triggers them. Of course, a lot of laws we operate under are easily recognizable, but there are others that are backburner laws and we are unaware of these. The Bible speaks of the hidden things of the heart. Well, these are much like those, hidden from conscious awareness, but active nonetheless.

“For example, in my life, my goal with my four boys and baby girl was not only to be a good father, but the best. This was one of my recognizable absolutes. And I had an inward satisfaction that I was a good father, that is, until my oldest boy became a teenager. Then for some reason I had no inward confidence of being a good father. I felt extremely uneasy and inexplicably I felt guilty about my relationship with him. Something was going on, but I didn’t know what.

“After much prayer and soul-searching, it dawned on me that when I reached the age of 13 I had no parental supervision or interaction. My father had become an alcoholic leaving my mother to run the family business. I did not develop any learning curve because of the absence of parental control and communications.

“What was going on was I was guilty of breaking my absolute of being a good father. No, it wasn’t my fault, but law doesn’t differentiate between who is at fault and who isn’t. I had to develop an entirely new learning curve to become what I felt was a good father.”

I was greatly intrigued by my reaction, so I began of study and it was through that study that I discovered the previously explained “guideposts of the past” or we tend to re-create our experiences from generation to generation. In other words, we absorb through observation and experience the events that make up our childhood. Although these, by in large, are put on the backburner, they pop up at a corresponding age of when they were first developed. For further study I would suggest my book, *Belief Systems*, which is book 11 and *FatherHunger/MotherHunger (AWOL Parents)*, which is Book 14 in the *Pneumanetics Original* series and can be secured by going to www.HisTruthTransforms.org/Store.

Most of the absolutes created as we grow up become backburner absolutes. Many have no effect upon us, but some carry a lot of weight and a certain amount of baggage. This is one of the several reasons God renews the mind.

THE PERFORMANCE TREADMILL

1. We live in a society characterized by activity rather than productivity.
2. Most Christians tend to renew their efforts rather than their minds.
3. It is not success that drives most men; rather it is the fear of failure.
4. We don’t need to work harder, just smarter.
5. Responsibility is the high priest of law-prone people.

6. Performance is the stuff law is made of.

“Let us do something, even if it is wrong” pretty much summarizes the mind-set of our present generation. We seek our strokes from what we do, not who we are. We build our identity from the same pattern. Tragically, those on the treadmill are driven people, with no idea how to escape.

What is not realized is there is no resolution, no end, no completion for the performance treadmill. It has an insatiable appetite that demands more and more and more. Of course, it has its attractions: fame, fortune, credentials, position, recognition, honors, acclamation – things that men hunger for. And for most, these worldly attractions are worth the treadmill.

Too, we are conditioned from childhood to climb aboard the treadmill. We could say the treadmill begins at home. It starts with the in-bred desire for parental acceptance. Each family has its own standards and limits, but normally parents accept their children on the basis of their keeping the standards and limits. In other words, on what they do. It is a rare parent who accepts the child because they are their child. Their acceptance is based on who the child is, not on the basis of measuring up to the family’s standards and limits. You see, it is possible to do this and still not condone the breaking or disregarding the necessary limits and standards of normal family parameters.

Parents have long been obsessed with the demand their child learn responsibility. Of course, we all know this is a noble thing. But did you realize that responsibility is not a New Testament concept? Responsibility is a product of law not of grace. Responsibility is the ability to maintain an acceptable response to demands placed on a person.

What then is the New Testament concept of right behavior if it is not responsibility? The answer, of course, is faithfulness. Faithfulness is a product of grace, and it is all that responsibility is not. There is a trap here many people fall into. They have been taught all their lives to be responsible people. They believe themselves to be responsible.

But what happens when they do something that they feel is irresponsible? It produces a contradiction in their lives, which in turn creates a super load of guilt. The law says a responsible person must always be and act responsible. Heaven help them if they are not, for their law won’t.

A responsible person who acts irresponsible (in their mind)
is a candidate for a severe guilt trip.

We find 2 Chronicles 25 a very interesting story. It concerns King Amaziah. In the 2nd verse, we come across this incredible statement:

“He did right in the sight of the Lord, yet not with a whole heart.”

This man was responsible, but he certainly was not faithful. You see, faithfulness includes not only true responsibility, but with it loyalty, reliability, integrity, and a healthy dose of humility.

You will note that Jesus didn't say, "Well done, thou good and responsible servant." No indeed, He said "*Well done, good and faithful servant*" Matthew 25:23, NLT. Try to understand we are responsible for being responsible, whereas, the Holy Spirit is the One who produces faithfulness. You cannot manufacture faithfulness, but you can become faithful by allowing the Holy Spirit to be the Holy Spirit in your life.

Several years ago, I happened to notice that someone had placed a large and colorful volume of character qualities in our foyer. It was extremely well done, the art work was exquisite, the binding the best, the paper of the highest quality. To say the least I was very impressed. However, as I thumbed through this book reading the various character qualities, I noticed that a great deal of emphasis was given to responsibility, but faithfulness was never mentioned!

I was stunned, so I carefully went back through to make certain I had not made a mistake and overlooked it. I hadn't. The author of the book was a nationally known speaker and writer, a man I thought highly of, but one who was known for his legalistic approach to life and ministry. I am quite certain that faithfulness has been added to the list of character qualities, but it simply demonstrated how deeply rooted the idea of being responsible is.

Because of the many "perks" associated with the treadmill life, not only the ones previously mentioned, but others, like the sense of satisfaction that comes with accomplishing a goal, or the good feeling that comes when praise comes your way for a job well done. I am not saying these things are bad at all, but they tend to reinforce the false sense of responsibility over faithfulness.

However, the performance treadmill carries with it a terrific price. First, there is the performance to develop identity. The stress this places on the individual and family is phenomenal. Second, there is the performance demanded by those who are in authority above us. Pity the person who serves under a perfectionist.

Years ago in the early days of my ministry I belonged to a very dynamic ministry and an equally dynamic and demanding leader. I desperately wanted to please this man, but I never could. It was during my second year on staff that I was confronted with the most excruciating experience up to that moment.

This explosive ministry placed great emphasis on personal evangelism and producing results. The hours were atrocious, but nothing mattered to the staff but seeing the Great Commission fulfilled in our generation. The staff was one big family and the highlight of the year was getting together at staff training where we enjoyed great fellowship.

While things were great with my campus ministry, an unfortunate program initiated by the leader went badly and there was a great deal of adverse publicity, including front page pictures and commentary. This, of course, did not enhance people's desire to contribute to the ministry. In those days, we shared and shared alike, no one raised their own personal support.

One morning I received a call from the ministry head who was livid with anger. He railed at me for the lack of giving in my area. Finally, he pronounced his judgment. I was not to be allowed to come to staff training unless the financial situation was reversed. I was utterly crushed.

Overwhelmed with guilt and failure, I didn't know where to turn, so when all else failed, I turned to God.

Later on when I was older, crustier, and probably meaner, I would never have let something like this happen without a confrontation. Fortunately by the time I had learned to confront, the leader had learned to control his anger. However, being new, young, and insecure I just slunk into my corner and pouted, sulked, and enjoyed a fabulous pity-party. Things got squared away, but I learned an invaluable lesson. Law imposed by higher authority (super-imposed laws) are extremely damaging. When someone else, who controls our destiny, sits at the seat of Moses, it becomes quite debilitating.

Absolutes that come from those in authority take on added weight because it can mean the loss of livelihood, the epitome of failure. Remember in the days of Jesus, the Pharisees set the standards and if they weren't kept, the Pharisees had the power to deny membership in the synagogue which would reduce one to a beggar in short order. The same things goes for today.

God has His standard of success:

“No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God” Micah 6:8, NLT.

“This is what the LORD says: ‘Don’t let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the LORD who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the LORD, have spoken!’” Jeremiah 9:23-24, NLT.

THE SEAT OF MOSES

Jesus had nothing but scorn for the Scribes and Pharisees. When He accused them of sitting in the seat of Moses, He meant they had assumed the authority to tell people what to do, how to do it, when to do it, where to do it, and why they should do it. It was a case of do what I say, not what I do.

The Pharisees were taskmasters at putting impossible burdens on people, but excusing themselves from like demands. They had claimed the role of Moses, passing out laws like candy at a birthday party. For example, on the Sabbath, the Law demanded one could not walk more than a certain distance. To attempt to go further invited capital punishment. However, a Pharisee, who knew he had to make a longer journey on the Sabbath, contrived to have a slave precede him and leave a personal item at the far end of the Sabbath journey. Then the slave would proceed with putting personal articles all along the way. In this manner, the Pharisee could say he hadn't traveled more than a Sabbath Day's journey because he had personal property at each of the days travel.

As Gentiles, not obligated to Jewish law, we have no real comprehension of the suffocating legal demands that is the lot of every Jew. They are governed by hundreds and hundreds of laws affecting every facet of their lives. I have read a book entitled “The Code of Jewish Law,” which contains the laws passed down by rabbis from generation to generation. I read them and think, “How ludicrous,” but what is more ludicrous to me is the pathetic attempts made by tens of thousands to keep these demands.

Well get this. We too, assume the seat of Moses imposing laws right and left, only these laws we impose on ourselves. Since we are the final authority, there is no appeal to the laws we create. We have to live by them, or sink into the cesspool of guilt. Romans 7 tells us the only way to escape the grasp of law, all law, is to die to it!

The only escape from law is to die to it!

Remember, I said we are created as law-prone people, and we are governed by a law-driven society, which is far better than anarchy, but far, far less than grace. In fact, the laws we create which are intended for safety and security become our enemy.

A law-filled Christian is a grace-dead Christian.

JUDGE, JURY, AND VERDICT

Reiterating what I said about, who is it who creates and establishes these laws or absolutes? We do! In this sense we sit in the “seat of Moses’ and create laws for any number of reasons. It is important that you understand this important principle. We create our own laws, we set our own absolutes. They are self-imposed!

But it doesn’t stop here. Who is to judge if a law is transgressed? We are! We are the sole judge of the laws we ourselves have created. But who is the jury and what is the punishment for breaking a law that we have created. We are! And the punishment for each transgression is set by us. In other words, we become creator, judge and jury and dispenser of justice whenever we break a law. We afford ourselves no mercy!

Let me give some examples of this. First, I take myself. Because I had a deep sense of inadequacy, my absolutes were more in the relationship category. I always felt I had done something wrong when I talked with people, especially those who were of a higher social set. Guilt would set in, and although I didn’t know what I had done, my guilt told me I had done something quite wrong. I was judge and jury and the verdict was always guilty. The punishment? My punishment was three days of intense guilt feelings. I remember how I hated going through those three days. Stupid? I guess, but I wasn’t alone.

In another situation, I had a wife and mother come in to see me. She was devastated by guilt, anxieties, depression, and panic attacks – to the degree that she was becoming a obsessive-compulsive person. (This was the result of rituals created to offset the pain she was experiencing.) She was brilliant, beautiful, and desperate.

In the course of our time together, I began looking for her absolutes. There were many, but she had put an unreasonable weight on two: Thou shall not be immoral and thou shall not doubt God. Now at first sight, these seem quite reasonable. As Christians we shouldn't be immoral, neither should we doubt God. The only trouble was they were destroying her.

Because of any relationship with her father was nil, she had an inbred attraction to older men, although it never went beyond an attraction. She was simply looking for a daddy. However, if even a hint of an immoral thought passed her mind, the game was up. Although, she would deal with the thought immediately, bringing it before the Lord and under the blood, it was too late. It had already triggered her law of being immoral.

It soon became apparent to me she followed a certain protocol, self-made, whenever she felt she had transgressed a law. First, she would begin to ask questions, which is characteristic of conscience problems. (The moral being, don't ask questions! See 1 Corinthians 10:27.) Her questions to herself would go like this: "Why did you think such a thought?" "I thought you were supposed to be a good Christian?" "What is wrong with me that I would do such a thing?" "Would a Christian think such a thing?"

Then she would go on, "I am still a Christian though." "How do you know?" "A Christian wouldn't think such a thought?" "God says I am a Christian." "How do you know He thinks you are a Christian, if you think thoughts like that?" "Because God loves me." "How do you know God loves you?" "Are you certain?"

Then she would begin to doubt God, which was a no no, as far as her absolutes were concerned. The minute that happened she would go into a severe panic attack. The panic attack was her self-imposed punishment for breaking her law. It took time, but she began to recognize that her absolutes were wrong and the Bible was right. It was then she began to replace laws with grace. Because the way we are wired, being law-prone people we cannot escape guilt at one time or another.

For further study on guilt and law, I suggest my books, *The Torah Syndrome (Law and Legalism in a Christian's Life)* and *The Torah Syndrome (Legalism and Standards)* which is Book 12 in the *Pneumanetics Original* series, and can be secured by going to www.HisTruthTransforms.org/Store.

BREAKING THE BONDS

Jesus said, "*Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light*" Matthew 11:28-30, NLT.

Jesus is speaking here of throwing off the yoke of law. Oxen were fitted with yokes so they could pull heavy loads. It was important the yokes did not rub them raw. Therefore, they were made to order, as it were. More importantly were the yokes of the water carriers. If their yokes did not fit or were ill-made, it made the carrying of water a far more tedious and painful chore. Law, Jesus is saying, is a painful yoke, while grace is smooth and fitted for the person.

If God does not require us to feel guilty, there is no need to do so. Emotional guilt is no highway to holiness, just the opposite. Emotional guilt is irrational guilt, but because of the pain it produces it becomes a final authority – replacing the Word of God in actuality.

Men are governed, not by reason, but through the
pain and/or pleasure of their emotions.

We are ruled by what we consider to be true, final, authoritative, in other words, by absolutes. Because of the strength, nature and pain of the renegade emotions, it is quite easy to allow them to dominate and control our lives. It is no secret that pain gets attention.

We once had a young girl living with us who developed an ingrown toe nail that became infected. To say the least it was sore. She babied that toe, just like I would have done. It hurt! One day she accidentally stubbed it and fainted dead away. In short, for a time that toe ruled her life.

So it is with any pain in our life. It garners all of our attention. But, there is a problem – how do you put a band-aid on an emotion? Or in another sense, are we trying to close a gaping wound with nothing more than a band-aid? Let me say, if your guilt is related to something circumstantial, it will probably require nothing more than a band-aid. However, if your guilt is so severe it is affecting your mental and emotional well-being, then you have a wound and a band-aid just won't suffice.

It is important you attack your guilt. Don't accept it. Remember, emotional guilt is irrational guilt. God doesn't require you to feel guilty.

Now we have talked a lot about guilt, let us address how to deal with it.

YOUR NEXT STEPS...

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

The next step to understanding how to continue to express healthy emotions is to grow in your experiential knowledge of God. Developing a healthy identity that reflects the indwelling presence of Christ and accepting the Bible as God's Word—and therefore, as our final and supreme authority—are equally important.

Every Christian has a personal testimony of God's grace in their lives. Unfortunately, many remain only babies in Christ, choosing not to grow in Christian maturity and develop an intimate and joyful relationship with God. To continue in your journey of knowing God is to learn, understand, and activate what we call foundational truths.

“For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil” Hebrews 5:13-14.

The first foundational truth is “**Understanding who you are in Christ.**” The reason this truth is so important is because most believers step into their new birth experience with their old mind chatter dictating their emotions, behaviors, and beliefs. This dialog is normally in opposition to their new identity in Christ.

The second foundational truth is “**The Holy Spirit.**” Without understanding of the indwelling, empowering work of the Holy Spirit, we are left to go through life under our own initiative and power instead of God's. The Holy Spirit is the One who takes God's Truths and makes them a reality in our lives.

The third foundational truth is “**Renewing the mind.**” Without the process of renewing our mind to the truth of who God is and who God says we are, we will continually struggle in our Christian walk striving to experience the abundant life Christ promised.

The fourth foundational truth is “**Seeing your Heavenly Father for who He truly is.**” The important point here is believers usually take their experiences with their earthly dads, moms, and authority figures, good or bad, and clip art those experiences to God's face and end up worshipping God incorrectly.

The cornerstone of these foundational truths is “**The Holy of Holies: the temple of God.**” Jesus, through His life, death, and resurrection, made it possible for believers to have immediate access to God and His throne, the Holy of Holies. For believers to understand they are God's temple and God's Spirit lives in them (1 Corinthians 3:16), brings in a worship that sets them free to experience their life in Christ, free to worship God in spirit and truth, and free to follow the Holy Spirit as He renews the believer's mind to truth.

For further study on these foundational truths, I recommend you do our *Free Indeed!* Bible study and our *Pneumanetics Original* series which are outlined on page 32.

As you have read this book, hopefully it has helped you begin to know God at a deeper level so He becomes the most important person in your life. As our relationship with God continues to mature, it allows us to break free from the power of sin, free from the power of our renegade emotions, and live in victory as a believer. God's empowering presence is what enables us not only to live the Christian life victoriously, but to serve Him effectively. This transformation makes us outwardly what God has already made us to be inwardly.

RENEWING OUR MIND

As we have said, emotions are a fact of life, but we don't have to experience them in a negative way. God doesn't simply remove the destructive emotions that taunt and haunt us. No, that would leave a vacuum which cannot exist. He does something far better; He replaces them with Spirit-filled emotions.

Emotions in and of themselves are not right or wrong. They are morally neutral. However, they do communicate to us there is something going on in our thoughts and beliefs that need to be examined. We need to understand and allow our emotions to be an indicator to a deeper problem. When our emotions become messy and controlling, they have become more true to us than God's Word. This is why it is so important to ask ourselves, "Why do we feel the way we feel?" This is something David practiced.

"Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me?" Psalm 42:5a.

There is a reason we feel the way we do, and we need to examine how our thoughts and beliefs are promoting our emotions. God desires to help us handle our emotions:

"Casting all your cares [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares about you [with deepest affection, and watches over you very carefully]" 1 Peter 5:7, Amplified Bible.

The moment we accept Christ as Lord and Savior, we receive a new heart, a new human spirit, and the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. God is beginning a mighty process of conforming us to the image of His Son. The environment in which God does this work is called life and all that it entails. The method of conforming us to the image of Jesus is the work of the Holy Spirit through the revealing of truth, and it requires us to respond by applying that truth to our lives. As we are now understanding, Scripture calls this process renewing the mind, also known as "putting off" the lie or renegade emotion and "putting on" the truth or the healthy emotion. Again, our involvement in this process is imperative.

The question that comes up is "What lies are we renewing our mind from?" This would be anything and everything that stand in contradiction to God's Word. Since our unrenewed beliefs, thoughts, emotions, and behavior think in contradiction to God's truth, they must be dealt with so that we can function as God has designed us as new creations in Christ.

Recognition is the key to correctly diagnosing our renegade emotion. When we correctly diagnose what is causing our emotion it allows us to respond in a Godly way.

HOLY SPIRIT’S EMPOWERMENT

Christians seem to be willing over and over again to renew their efforts—rather than renewing their minds. Renewing our minds is not an option. It’s a command that comes directly from God. However, we cannot renew our minds correctly apart from the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit leads, directs, and executes our renewal from within us, something He does daily (2 Corinthians 4:16). There are many secular programs such as behavior modification or the power of positive thinking, but all of these programs attempt to change a person from the outside in, rather than God’s way of changing a person from the inside out. A true renewing of the mind can only come through the application of Truth by the Holy Spirit.

The renewing of the mind is a partnership, the product of an active, engaged relationship between us and the Holy Spirit—the same power that raised Christ from the dead—within us. Renewal is a process that, over time, changes our renegade emotions to healthy emotions or wrong beliefs into right ones. Renewal is a spiritual exercise where we practice to consistently make volitional decisions by our faith, rather than by our feelings.

PUTTING OFF / PUTTING ON

Again, a key principle of Christian sanctification is known as “putting on” and “putting off” or renewing our minds. The idea is simple. It means to change from one thing to another, in the same way that you would take off one set of clothing (“putting them off”), and then “putting on” another set of clothing in their place.

Putting off your renegade emotions can prove very frustrating because there’s typically a gap between the moment when we make a decision in faith and the outcome of that choice, the time when we finally get to experience the reality of that decision in our lives. But as you keep choosing God’s Truth, allowing the Holy Spirit to change you, permanent change will take place. Keep persevering in trusting God to keep transforming you into His likeness.

In the process of putting off, God never removes one thing without replacing it with something far better (putting on). If you find the prospect of becoming a different person intimidating, try to remember that God is in the business of creating masterpieces, not imitations. He loves you and He wants only what’s best for you—even more than you do!

Because we continue receiving inputs that we need to process for the rest of our lives, we are using the R.E.A.C.T. process in dealing with our renegade emotions and our inaccurate beliefs to help us constantly challenge our erroneous belief system, transforming deception with Biblical truth.

RENEWING OUR MINDS USING R.E.A.C.T.

R -	RECOGNIZE	the real problem; identify the emotion and the source of that emotion.
E -	EVALUATE	your thoughts; ask God what you are thinking and believing that is causing this emotion

		to surface.
A -	AFFIRM	by admitting you alone are accountable for your emotional response. Ask God to show you anything in your life He wants to deal with.
C -	CONFRONT	in faith; recognize your emotions seem more real than God's Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to replace the negative emotion with His Godly emotion which motivates your Godly behavior.
T -	TRUST	in God, His Word, and the Holy Spirit to work in your life. Thank God He is in the process of conforming you to His image and allowing you to walk in your new identity in Christ.

RECOGNIZING OUR EMOTIONS:

In recognizing what emotion we are experiencing, we need to ask ourselves, "Has something made me produce this emotion, or do I feel this all the time?" In either case, recognizing our emotions and the source is necessary in dealing with them.

EVALUATING OUR EMOTIONS:

Start by acknowledging what emotion you are experiencing. Review the chart, "How Do You Feel?" on page 31. You can ask God, "How am I responding to people, situations, and circumstances?" to help identify what I am feeling. Then begin to ask God what your thoughts and beliefs are that are causing this emotion to surface.

For this book, we are adding steps 1-6 in recognizing guilt:

- 1. Begin by asking yourself the following questions:**
 - a. Why do I feel guilty?
 - b. Is there something I have done or said that should make me feel guilty?
 - c. Has someone said something to me to cause me to feel guilty?
 - d. What steps have I taken to alleviate the feelings of guilt?
- 2. Take a piece of paper and jot down anything and everything that might cause you to feel guilty.** Once you have finished doing this, go before the Lord and release each one to the Lord Jesus. Then thank Him for assuming your burden.
- 3. Evaluate yourself honestly, and candidly.** Can you say that you have no problem with your identity? Wrong thoughts about one's self turn us into people pleasers. Our own sense of inadequacy is usually buffered and bolstered by laws we create. They are a source of guilt.

AFFIRMING OUR EMOTIONS:

Affirmation is simply admitting to something in your life God needs to deal with. It is so easy to become upset at a person instead of dealing with what is going on inside us. The Bible teaches

we are accountable for the decisions we make. Remember, we are responsible for our emotional response, no matter the cause. No one puts the emotion in us, they simply bring it out.

CONFRONTING THE EMOTIONS:

You cannot appease an emotion. With any emotion, we need to enlist the power of the Holy Spirit in addressing it. You simply confront it in faith, asking the Holy Spirit to “put off” your negative emotion and replace it by “putting on” His Godly emotion which motivates Godly behavior. It might take time but God’s promises never fail and He will allow you to overcome the destructive power of the emotion in your life.

- 4. Feelings of guilt can become habitual.** To break this, every time you feel guilty begin to praise God. This will be difficult at first, but praise is a powerful tool in breaking the guilt trip pattern.
- 5. Make certain of your walk with Christ.** Are there areas in your life that contradict Scriptures?
- 6. Ask the Spirit of God to replace or “put off” a sense of responsibility and to “put on” a true sense of faithfulness.**

TRUSTING GOD:

There can be no real or meaningful changes in lifestyle apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. Thank God He is allowing you to walk in your new identity in Christ. You are being conformed to His image.

The end result will be you living in holiness and worshipping God which leads to experiencing the abundant life God promised!

HOW DO YOU FEEL?

<p>LONELY</p> <p>left out friendless forsaken lost isolated withdrawn lonesome insignificant separate rejected withdrawn</p>	<p>ANGRY</p> <p>furious hacked off aggravated mad hard irritated distant frustrated boiling indignant out of control</p>	<p>SAD</p> <p>dejected unhappy dreary woeful depressed cheerless blue grieving gloomy glum downcast heavy-hearted</p>	<p>HAPPY</p> <p>joyful ecstatic cheerful upbeat glad pleased delighted light bright vivacious elated bouncy</p>	<p>LOVING</p> <p>tender affectionate warm accepting kind devoted forgiving loyal sympathetic caring</p>
<p>GUILTY</p> <p>ashamed criticized cursed damned doomed dirty judged trapped embarrassed</p>	<p>INADEQUATE</p> <p>weak small useless bashful meager deficient inept powerless vulnerable</p>	<p>PEACEFUL</p> <p>calm quiet serene collected sedate content composed cool tranquil</p>	<p>BELONGING</p> <p>popular famous needed important well-known accepted attached influential valuable worthwhile</p>	<p>SECURE</p> <p>safe protected stable optimistic sure poised hopeful confident assured</p>
<p>AFRAID</p> <p>anxious frightened alarmed jumpy fearful shocked unnerved tight scared terrified timid shaky</p>	<p>HATEFUL</p> <p>hostile unfriendly mean critical quarrelsome nasty jealous spiteful harsh</p>	<p>POWERFUL</p> <p>strong energetic assertive upbeat great dominant pushy assured sure aggressive confident intoxicated</p>	<p>INNOCENT</p> <p>pardoned pure forgiven clean set free released exonerated fresh naïve acquitted justified</p>	<p>OTHER:</p>

ACTIVE STEPS:

To continue this transformation in making you outwardly what God has already made you to be inwardly we recommend the following classes and books:

- 1. Free Indeed! God's Empowering Word Infused in our Lives Makes us Free Indeed.**
This is a 9-week Bible study held at His Truth Transforms International, local churches, home Bible Studies, or can be purchased and completed on your own.
- 2. Pneumanetics Original Series.** This 18-book series will cover every aspect of your Christian life. You can purchase the books and/or take our two semester training class, which is beneficial for personal growth or equipping you as a Biblical counselor. The following topics are:

SESSION 1 THE BASICS

- Book 1 Introduction
- Book 2 The Sufficiency of Scripture
- Book 3 The Nature of Man
- Book 4 The Fall of Man
- Book 5 The Self-Life
- Book 6 Spiritual Warfare

SESSION 2 THE BEGINNING

- Book 7 Our New Life in Christ
- Book 8 It Took a Miracle (Forgiveness)
- Book 9 Candidate for a Miracle (Being Filled with the Spirit)
- Book 10 Living on the Cutting Edge

SESSION 3 THE BELIEFS

- Book 11 Belief Systems
- Book 12 The Torah Syndrome (Legalism and Standards)
- Book 13 Becoming Who You Already Are (Building a Christian Identity)
- Book 14 FatherHunger/MotherHunger (AWOL Parents)

SESSION 4 THE BENEFITS

- Book 15 ABBA Father (Knowing God as Father)
- Book 16 A God for All Seasons
- Book 17 The Grace Connection
- Book 18 Worship His Majesty

- 3. Visit HTTI'S Bookstore** to order the additional books on *Preventing Emotional Meltdown; Overcoming Emotions that Destroy Series* which are "God's Solution for Man's Anger," "God's Solution for Man's Anxiety," "God's Solution for Man's Depression," "God's Solution for Man's Fear," and "God's Solution for Man's Guilt," as well as other books written by Jim Craddock.

Also, to learn more about the classes and seminars offered, or sign up for counseling at www.HisTruthTransforms.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James Henry Craddock, author, lecturer, pioneer in biblical counseling, and founder of several God-focused and life-changing ministries, came to Christ through the ministry of The Navigators on Okinawa, where he served as a nuclear weapons disposal technician. Following graduation from the University of Colorado, he joined Campus Crusade for Christ, where he ministered for 15 years to college students, speaking on more than 50 campuses each year.

In 1973, Jim founded Scope Ministries International, a ministry of biblical counseling. He has authored over 27 publications, including *Pneumanetics Original*, *Pneumanetics*, and co-authored *Be Transformed*, which continues to be used by individuals, churches and biblical counseling centers. In 1986, Jim founded the International Association of Biblical Counselors to unite the discipline of biblical counseling.

Following the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City, World Trade Center attacks in New York City, and several natural disasters, Jim wrote a Rapid Response Manual, which was used as a prototype by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA), to assist ministries in their disaster relief outreach. BGEA called on Jim to lead the counseling at The International Conferences for Itinerant Evangelists at Amsterdam 83, 86 & 2000 and to provide counseling at many of the BGEA Conferences around the world.

In 2006, Jim's latest calling was His Truth Transforms International. A faith-based, non-denominational 501(c)(3) ministry founded on the sufficiency of Christ and His Word.

On April 1, 2014, Jim went home to his Heavenly Father. We are so thankful that he spent his life taking biblical truths and transforming them into principles that, when applied, will transform a person's life from the inside out. Jim devoted his life to helping others know the one true God. He is greatly missed!

ABOUT HIS TRUTH TRANSFORMS INTERNATIONAL

– providing Biblical tools for effective ministry –

His Truth Transforms International (HTTI) was founded in 2006 by Jim and Doris Craddock and Christi Craddock Taylor. This unique nonprofit, faith-based, non-denominational 501(c)(3) ministry was founded on the sufficiency of Christ and His Word. HTTI is designed to utilize Biblical truth in the development of material and programs that will enhance a Believer's walk with Christ and their ministry for Christ. HTTI offers personal and group counseling, classes, seminars, published books and material that will deepen a believer's personal relationship with Christ, as well as equip one to disciple others, both locally and internationally.

HTTI's heartfelt conviction is that biblical counseling must have a solid foundation in the Word of God in order to provide answers to hurting people. HTTI's goal is not to fix a person's problems, but rather to see a person transformed from the inside out through the Holy Spirit, God, and His Word.

HTTI does not charge for their counseling. The ministry is funded through the generous gifts of people who have a heart for helping others or who have been personally impacted by their lives being transformed through God's work in this ministry. Donations can be made at www.HisTruthTransforms.org/Give.