



2025 Study Guide

- Prince George's Church of Christ
 - Complied By:
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- The Prince George's Church of Christ 2025 Study Guide is a topical plan focused on releasing toxic people, situations, and behaviors in order to unlock your full potential for spiritual growth. While in this earth, Jesus addressed the focus of our study in John 10:10 when he said, "The thief comes only to steal and to kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the fullest."
- Until the decision is made and acted upon to do the work of releasing spiritually unhealthy people, situations and even behaviors, abundant living will not be achieved.

How To Utilize The Study Guide

- **Weekly Study:** Each sub-topic can be explored weekly, providing a focused and in-depth study of each theme.
- **Reflection and Prayer:** Encourage personal reflection and prayer on how to apply each lesson in daily life to achieve spiritual growth and freedom.
- **Group Discussions:** These topics can be used for group Bible studies, discussions, or individual reflection, helping participants grow together.
- This plan is designed to help you identify, release, and heal from toxic influences in your life, empowering you to reach your full potential in Christ.

Three Critical Definitions To Know

- **Clinical Definition: Releasing Toxic People, Situations, and Behaviors**
- **Clinical Definition:** Releasing toxic people, situations, and behaviors involves identifying and eliminating relationships, environments, and habits that contribute to mental and emotional distress, hinder personal growth, or perpetuate unhealthy patterns. Clinically, this process may involve therapy, counseling, or self-help strategies to develop healthier boundaries, foster resilience, and promote mental well-being. It includes recognizing signs of toxicity, such as manipulation, emotional abuse, chronic negativity, and stress, and taking proactive steps to distance oneself from these influences to achieve psychological and emotional health.
- **Social Definition: Releasing Toxic People, Situations, and Behaviors**
- **Social Definition:** Releasing toxic people, situations, and behaviors refers to the intentional act of distancing oneself from relationships and environments that are harmful or detrimental to one's social well-being and personal development. Socially, this process is about fostering positive interactions and networks that support mutual respect, growth, and well-being. It involves setting boundaries, avoiding harmful social dynamics, and cultivating supportive and uplifting relationships that contribute to a healthy and constructive social life.
- **Theological Definition: Releasing Toxic People, Situations, and Behaviors**
- **Theological Definition:** Theologically, releasing toxic people, situations, and behaviors is viewed as an act of spiritual discernment and obedience to God's will, where individuals seek to align their lives with biblical principles of holiness, peace, and righteousness. This involves separating oneself from influences that lead away from God's purpose, hinder spiritual growth, or promote sinful behaviors. Theologically, this process includes seeking God's guidance in setting boundaries, embracing forgiveness, and pursuing relationships and habits that reflect Christ's love and lead to spiritual maturity and freedom in Christ.

Emotional Consequences:

1. Chronic Stress and Anxiety:

- Remaining in toxic relationships or holding onto negative behaviors can lead to ongoing stress and anxiety, which can erode mental well-being over time.

2. Depression:

- The constant negativity and emotional abuse in toxic environments can contribute to feelings of hopelessness, sadness, and depression.

3. Low Self-Esteem:

- Toxic relationships often involve manipulation and criticism, which can diminish one's self-worth and confidence.

4. Emotional Instability:

- Constant exposure to toxic influences can lead to mood swings, irritability, and difficulty managing emotions.

Physical Consequences:

5. Chronic Health Issues:

- Persistent stress from toxic relationships and behaviors can lead to physical health problems such as headaches, high blood pressure, heart disease, and weakened immune function.

6. Fatigue and Exhaustion:

- The emotional toll of toxic environments can manifest physically, leading to constant tiredness, lack of energy, and burnout.

7. Sleep Disorders:

- Anxiety and stress from toxic influences can disrupt sleep patterns, leading to insomnia or poor-quality sleep.

8. Increased Risk of Substance Abuse:

- Individuals may turn to alcohol, drugs, or other substances as a coping mechanism for the pain and stress caused by toxic influences.

Spiritual Consequences:

9. Stagnation in Spiritual Growth:

- Toxic relationships and behaviors can hinder spiritual progress, making it difficult to grow in faith and understanding of God's will.

10. Distance from God:

- Engaging in or tolerating sinful behaviors and negative influences can create a barrier between an individual and their relationship with God.

11. Loss of Peace and Joy:

- Toxic influences can rob a person of the peace and joy that comes from a close walk with God, leading to spiritual dissatisfaction and unrest.

12. Guilt and Shame:

- Continued involvement in toxic behaviors can lead to feelings of guilt and shame, which can further distance a person from God's grace and forgiveness.

- **Series One:-**

- New Testament Overview: Toxicity and Its Impact on Relationships of Godly People
- From Greek “toxikon (pharmakon – poison)
- In ancient Greek the adjective “toxic” which originates from the noun “toxos” (the arc)
- **- refers to one capable of using a bow with a substance with the characteristic of poison.**

Medical Toxin

- An investigation of the meaning and the roots of the snake's usage as a symbol of medicine, the medical profession, toxicology (study of effects) and toxinology (study of poisons) by examining mythological, archeological data and a variety of texts from the ancient Greek world rendered the following:
- The snake figure was associated with Asclepios, the ancient Greek God of medicine, and possessed benevolent properties. It was believed to be able to cure a patient or a wounded person just by touch. The snake is also connected with pharmacology and antisepsis, as snakes possess an antivenom against their own poison.
- The snake is related to sciences associated with poison and death, such as toxicology and toxinology, and it also implies a metaphysical idea. It is connected with the underworld, not only because it crawls on the ground, but because it can bring death, connecting the upper with the underground world. The ability of the snake to shed its skin has been associated with the circle of life, and the renaissance spirit also, ever since early Hellenic antiquity.
- Consequently, as a symbol of the modern medical profession, toxicology and toxinology, the snake twisted around a stick or the snake beside a pharmapeutic cup, which also implies the use of medicines or even poison, has its roots in the ancient Mediterranean area as proven by the archeological data combined with literary references. Its benevolent as well as its poisonous properties could be paralleled by the similar properties of medicines.

- **1. The Root of Toxicity: Sin and Self-Centeredness**

- **Key Verse:** *“For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”* (James 3:16)
- Toxicity in relationships often stems from sin, including jealousy, selfishness, and pride. These attitudes create strife and hinder the unity God desires for His people.
- The Pharisees exemplify how toxic behavior, rooted in pride and hypocrisy, strained their relationship with Jesus (Matthew 23:25-28).

• 2. Toxicity in Leadership and Communities

- **Example of Diotrephes:** *“Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will not welcome us. So when I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, spreading malicious nonsense about us.”* (3 John 1:9-10)
- Diotrephes illustrates how toxic leadership—marked by control, gossip, and rejection of accountability—can harm church unity and relationships.
- **Antidote:** Godly leadership involves humility, servanthood, and love. Leaders like Paul and Timothy modeled encouragement and sacrificial care for others (Philippians 2:19-22).

• 3. The Impact of Toxicity on Families

- **Jesus' Warning About Division:** *“For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother...’”* (Matthew 10:35)
- Toxicity within families often arises when godly values clash with worldly values. This division can lead to estrangement and emotional pain.
- **Encouragement:** Believers are called to remain steadfast in faith, prioritize love and forgiveness, and model Christlike humility in family relationships (Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:13).

• 4. Toxicity in Peer Relationships

- **Judas and Jesus:** The betrayal of Jesus by Judas is a stark example of toxicity in close relationships (Matthew 26:14-16). Motivated by greed and self-interest, Judas' actions caused immense harm.
- **Paul and Barnabas:** The sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas over John Mark (Acts 15:36-41) shows how even godly individuals can face relational conflict. Toxicity isn't always rooted in malice but can arise from differing perspectives.
- **Solution:** Resolving relational toxicity requires reconciliation and a focus on shared mission. Paul later reconciled with John Mark (2 Timothy 4:11), showing how relationships can be restored through grace.

- **5. Toxicity in the Church**

- **The Corinthian Church:** Paul's letters to the Corinthians address widespread toxicity, including divisions, sexual immorality, and misuse of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 1:10-13; 1 Corinthians 5:1-2).
- **Symptoms of Toxicity:** Gossip, cliques, judgmental attitudes, and a lack of love poison church unity.
- **Paul's Teaching:** Paul calls for love, humility, and service as the foundation for godly relationships (1 Corinthians 13). He emphasizes the importance of resolving conflict and pursuing peace (2 Corinthians 13:11).

• **6. Toxicity's Impact on God's Mission**

- **Peter's Hypocrisy:** Paul confronts Peter for his hypocritical behavior toward Gentile believers (Galatians 2:11-14). Peter's actions threatened the inclusivity of the Gospel and caused division.
- Toxicity can hinder the spread of God's mission when personal agendas, biases, or sin overshadow the call to unity.
- **Paul's Example:** Paul models bold confrontation, not for division, but to restore relationships and align them with God's purposes (Ephesians 4:15).

- **7. Overcoming Toxicity with Christlike Love**

- **Forgiveness and Restoration:** Jesus' forgiveness of Peter after his denial (John 21:15-17) is a powerful example of overcoming toxicity with love and grace.
- **Love as the Solution:** *“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”* (1 Peter 4:8)
- **Practical Steps:**
 1. Confront toxicity with truth and grace (Matthew 18:15-17).
 2. Pursue forgiveness and reconciliation (Matthew 5:23-24).
 3. Live out the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Month: January Lessons: Recognizing Toxicity

- **Key Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 15:33
- **Sub-Topics:**
 - 1. Understanding Toxic Relationships:** Identifying relationships that negatively impact your spiritual and emotional well-being.
 - 2. Toxic Influences - Galatians 5:7-9:** How even a little negativity can spread and hinder your growth.
 - 3. Discernment in Relationships - Proverbs 4:23:** Guarding your heart and discerning the impact of those around you.
 - 4. Signs of Toxicity:** Identifying toxic behaviors and situations that are holding you back.

Gemitus Sanctorum

- Psalms 55:6 So, I said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest.
- (known as the "groan of the godly")