



## SMALL GROUP GUIDE





## **Part One: Mind Control**

Ever asked God to help you? Sure you have. What might surprise you is the response you find in scripture to that prayer. Practical help for your life might be closer than you think, and a little more uncomfortable than you think.

**Scripture:** Psalm 101: 1-8 NLT

**Bottom Line:** Whatever controls your mind controls your life.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. If someone was to audit your thought life, what are a few subjects that would come up frequently?
2. In the message, Carey said that we used to own our devices, but it seems like these days they own us. What's been your experience with technology?
3. Read through all of Psalm 101, what verses surprise you? Does anything strike you as 'unChristian'?
4. The research quoted in the message certainly raises the alarm bells for parents and teens. To quote Jean Twenge from San Diego State University, "All screen activities are linked to less happiness, and all non screen activities are linked to more happiness." What are you noticing about a correlation between screen time and happiness? Or screen time and other factors in your life?
5. Do you know people who seem to be victims of their influences? What advice would you give them?
6. Carey said that while it can be hard to control what you think about, you can surrender your thoughts. Are there any thoughts in particular you need to surrender?

### **Growing Deeper**

Phillipians 4:4-9

Paul is quite passionate about what we allow into our minds. Discuss this passage and how it can help renew your mind.



### **Moving Forward**

Name one negative thought or influence in your mind that you'll reject and hand over to God by renouncing and surrendering every time you think about it.

Name one godly influence you need more of in your life. Figure out how to spend more time exploring that influence.

### **Changing Your Mind**

"I will reject perverse ideas and stay away from every evil." Psalm 101:4  
NLT



## Part Two: Toxic Things

One of the reasons many shy away from the Christian faith or avoid going deeper is because they fear giving up things they like, even though they suspect they may not be good for them. Can you be a Christian without being a prude?

**Scripture:** Psalm 101: 3-4

**Bottom Line:** What you allow into you deeply shapes what flows out of you.

### Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do Christian morals seem outdated or prudish to you?
2. Beyond alcohol or drugs, what kind of 'toxic' things have you watched negatively impact a friend's life?
3. Read through Psalm 101: 3-4. Do David's standards seem extreme to you? Why or why not?
4. How would your life be different if you followed David's approach to toxic things?
5. What toxic things could you prevent yourself from seeing or being involved in this week? How will you accomplish this? Who could help you do this?
6. What are one or two toxic things you could delete from your life over the next month? What impact do you think it would have on your life?

### Growing Deeper

Explore Romans 12:1-2. What would it mean to become a living sacrifice? How did King David embrace this principle in his life? How might you?

### Moving Forward

This week, quit something—get ride of at least one toxic influence from your life. Plot the difference it makes. In addition, try to put yourself in a place where you avoid seeing things you will wish you could “unsee”. Whether it's a movie, a video game, music, or an environment (place, group) that isn't good for you, pay attention to what you allow in your life.

### Changing Your Mind

“I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar. I will reject perverse ideas and stay away from every evil.” Psalm 101: 3-4 NLT



### Part Three: Toxic People

Can you follow Jesus and delete toxic people from your life? Surprisingly, yes. In fact, sometimes it's the most loving thing you can do. Join us to find out why, when, how to delete toxic people from your life. You might even discover who needs to go.

**Scripture:** Psalm 101:5, 7-8

**Bottom Line:** Sometimes goodbye is the most loving thing you can say.

### Discussion Questions

1. Who are some people in your life that you feel make you a better person when you are around them? Describe their impact on your life.
2. Without being too specific, do you have any people who “drain” you? Why do they drain you?
3. Do you think it's acceptable for Christians to ‘delete’ people from their lives? Why or why not?
4. What standard does David establish in Psalm 101: 5,7-8 for those who will be allowed to be around him? Does that strike you as harsh?
5. How do you think David's life was different because he ‘deleted’ toxic people from his life?
6. In the message, Carey explained how sometimes, saying goodbye to someone is the most loving thing you can do. Do you agree? Why or why not?
7. Are there toxic people in your life you need to separate yourself from for a season (or longer)? How will you do that in a loving way? What might hinder you from following through on this decision?
8. How will your life be different because toxic people are not allowed to gain influence?

### Growing Deeper

The early Christians had a hard time figuring out what to do with people who were unrepentant and were harming the church. Paul gave them advice on that subject in 1 Corinthians 5:9-13. Read the passage and discuss why Paul took such a hard line on that. What are the implications for your life?



### **Moving Forward**

Take some time to pray deeply for the person or people you need to delete from your life for a season. If you feel any sense of delight or satisfaction in breaking the tie, keep praying before you have the conversation. Your primary motivation should be to want to help them by cutting off the relationship. Remember to pray for their well-being after you set the boundaries you need to set. And remember, this does not always apply to the person you are married to.

### **Changing Your Mind**

“My daily task will be to ferret out the wicked and free the city of the Lord from their grip.” Psalm 101: 8 NLT



#### **Part Four: Add, Follow, Block**

As much as there are some things we should delete in our lives, there are some things that should never be blocked. In fact, they need to be saved, added and followed. Pursued. We'll look at the kinds of things--and the kinds of people--you want to always have close to you.

**Scripture:** Psalm 101:1-2, 6.

**Bottom Line:** If want more good things in your life, increase the time you spend with good people.

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. Name two or three things in your life right now you would call great. How did you discover them?
2. Which people have had some of the best influence on you over the course of your life? In what ways have you cultivated these relationships to make sure they stay as strong influences in your life?
3. Have some people been a bad influence in your life? What happened?
4. Take a few minutes to read Psalm 101: 1-2 and verse 6. Who are some of the people in your life that meet the characteristics of the people David describes in verse 6?
5. What are you doing in your life right now to make the people who influence you most positively in your life even stronger?
6. Carey walked you through Dr. John Townsend's guide to finding 3-10 great people in your life who could provide both deep friendships and good influence. What would it take to cultivate a Life Team like the one described in the message?

#### **Growing Deeper**

Proverbs is a collection of wisdom sayings that predates Jesus' life and ministry by about 1000 years. Read Proverbs 13:20 and discuss the principles the writer shares. Does associating with the wise make you wiser? What's the impact of associating with fools? How would you define 'foolish' after this series?



### **Moving Forward**

This week, listen to the bonus podcast for this series featuring the conversation Carey Nieuwhof had with Dr. John Townsend (or see Dr. Townsend's new book, *People Fuel*, pp. 167-185). Schedule a lunch or coffee with at least one person you think has the potential to be a member of your life time. If you're looking for excellent things, the place to start is excellent people.

### **Changing Your Mind**

"I will search for faithful people to be my companions." Psalm 101: 6 NLT



There are so many influences vying for your attention, and so many people trying to get you to pay attention. Every day, who and what you choose to follow shapes you. So... who and what should you add and follow? And who or what should you block? Actually, can you even block people from your life and still call yourself a Christian? You might be surprised at the answer. In this series we'll look at how to boost the good and delete the toxic from your life.



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