

# What is Meant by “Bible Detox”?

*a working document from the Center and Library for the Bible and Social Justice (CLBSJ)*

To frame our Lenten Bible Detox practice, here is a short overview of what we mean by “Bible Detox.”

A common question about the term “Bible Detox” is, are we implying that the scripture itself is toxic? This is not the intention of the metaphor. Although the Bible is full of extremely challenging content, CLBSJ sees that the *source* of the toxicity is *the use and misuse* of the text to justify and perpetuate the worst aspects of human behavior. The *effects* of this toxicity are then felt in *our relationship with sacred text*, compromising our spiritual lives. Therein lies the need for detoxing.

The intention of this series is to support personal and collective healing from the damage that has been done by the misuse of Biblical texts. In this study, we have been focusing attention on scriptures that have been used to perpetuate various forms of oppression, violence or harm — often, these are texts that many of us would probably prefer to ignore.

In some cases, this destructive use is due to a misunderstanding of the text. In other cases, the text itself does indeed contain the seeds of these harmful ideas. In many cases, it is a little bit of both.

In any of these cases, the goal of this series is not to “redeem” these texts, nor is it to critique them until they can mean nothing for us. The goal, rather, is to offer resources and healthy space to help us improve our relationship with the Bible as a whole — which must begin with countering the silences around the misuse of these texts.

Each of our speakers are bringing different tools and perspectives to help us gain traction and strengthen our “immune systems” with reference to the damage caused by the misuse of these texts.

That process of moving toward “health” will look different for each of us, and it is our hope that this series offers resources and a supportive community for all who are on this journey.

*Your thoughts and questions are welcome. Please direct them to [clbsjorg@gmail.com](mailto:clbsjorg@gmail.com)*

*Register for upcoming sessions and watch archives at <https://clbsj.org/events/lenten-detox/>*