



Thrive- Week 1

HIGH SCHOOL AND ADULT GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**GROUP PREP**

In preparation for group, [watch Emmanuel's weekend service message](#), then answer the following discussion questions.

SOCIAL TIME (15-30 minutes)

Have an ice-breaker ready, eat a snack together, and/or go around the circle asking your group members to share any news since your last meeting if your group is continuing from last semester. Be intentional in helping your group members get to know one another during this time and make it fun.

Ice-Breaker suggestion: Have the group share their favorite way to pass free time. Are they a board game player (what kinds), movie extraordinaire (favorite ones), or do they prefer to cozy up by a fire with a book (what are you reading)?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (45-60 minutes)

God made you to thrive. Thriving means to flourish, to prosper, or to grow vigorously. A thriving life in God is marked by joy, peace, love, faith, grace, purpose, and meaning. Yet, our path to a thriving life is under constant opposition. We live in a world with a real enemy who uses lies to hinder us from thriving the way God designed. The enemy is strategic in the way he speaks into our life. The best way to combat his lies is to connect to the ultimate source of truth, which is God.

1. When you imagine someone you consider to be "thriving," who comes to mind? Maybe it's Jeff Bezos, one of the Kardashians, Christine Caine, or Justin Bieber? Or is it someone who even lives in your community?

Why does that person come to mind? How would you define "thriving"?

2. When we are thriving the way God intended, we are experiencing a life filled with joy, peace, love, faith, grace, and purpose. Yet, when looking around at the world today, we see so much anxiety, selfishness, hate, immorality, etc. We see a world filled with **pain**. Pain leaves us vulnerable, and it is in seasons of pain Satan loves to sweep in and whisper lies into our minds.

Can you think of a season of pain where you questioned if God was trustworthy? Describe that season with the group. How did that pain serve as either an accelerant or a hinderer of your growth as a Christ-follower?



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3. Being a follower of Jesus does not guarantee a life void of pain. Still, it guarantees an opportunity to connect to God, who is in complete control and always plans for our good.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your willingness to trust God amidst pain in your life? Why did you give yourself that rating?

Based on the rating you gave yourself, would you describe yourself as thriving?

4. Dallas Willard says in his book *Renovation of the Heart*, “*Irredeemable harm does not befall those who willingly live in the hand of God.*” [Read Romans 8:28.](#)

To thrive, we have to be willing to trust God. He is in control, and He has a plan for our lives.

What step can you take this week to strengthen your connection or trust in God?

ACTION STEP (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the following or create your own.

- **Memorize Scripture:** God speaks truth most clearly through His word. [Romans 8:28](#), [Genesis 50:20](#), [John 10:10](#), [John 14:27](#), [Isaiah 43:2](#), [James 1:2-4](#), or [Jeremiah 29:11](#) are great places to start building trust.
- **Start a devotional:** One that will help you develop confidence in the character of God. Consider one of these Bible plan apps: [Perfect Trust](#), [Know Your Enemy](#), or [Peace in your Pain](#).
- **Prayer:** Carve out a specific time to talk with and hear from God. Use the Lectio 365 App to guide you through a daily time of prayer ([Apple store](#) or [Google play](#))
- **Connect:** Get coffee or have a phone conversation with someone who has displayed a strong trust in God. Allow them to encourage you and share their faith with you.
- **Read a book:** Consider one mentioned in the weekend service [Thrive by Arianna Huffington](#), [Mere Christianity by C.S Lewis](#), or [Renovation of the Heart by Dallas Willard](#)
- **Daily time with God:** Determine the type of routine you'd like to have to spend time learning about what pleases God. Here are some ways to do this:
 - [Download the Emmanuel app](#) and read the One Year New Testament daily.
 - [Download the YouVersion app](#) and find a devotion you can do daily. You can even decide to do one as a group to encourage one another as you do the daily readings.
 - If you recently placed your faith in Christ and texted SAVED to 65248, read the devotional provided in your starter kit.

**Thrive- Week 1****PRAYER (5-10 minutes)**

Give everyone in your group an index card. Ask them to write their name and action step on one side and a prayer request on the other. When finished, have everyone pass their cards to the left. Everyone in the group now has someone to connect with throughout the coming week for three reasons:

1. To build the relationship
2. To encourage to accomplish their action step
3. To pray for in a specific way

Ask them to place the index card on their nightstand or another place that would allow them to see it and use it every day.

GROUP SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

To determine how your group can serve together in the surrounding community, email Breanne Schafer, Emmanuel's Associate Outreach Director, at bschafer@eclife.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 7th | Worship Development

September 11th | Impact Week Begins

September 12th | VERB

September 18th | Family Adventure

You can find more information on all of these events at eclife.org.