

Thriving in Place

Grow (April 26th, 2020)

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

DISCUSSION

Opening Prayer: (1-2 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's a suggestion of how your group can invite God into your time together.

Thank the Lord for His sovereignty over all things! Praise the Son for his ability to compassionately sympathize with our suffering! Praise Jesus for dying in our place and conquering sin so that by faith, we will be brought into an everlasting kingdom where there will be no more sickness, pain, and suffering as we fellowship with God! As we shelter in place, pray that we would continue to seek the Lord's voice and obey His commands in the power the Holy Spirit! Finally, pray that the good news of Jesus would reach those who are suffering from the Coronavirus by sending us to represent your love!

Discussion: (45-60 minutes)

What's Going on This Week

This Sunday, Pastor Danny led us into the second week of our mini-series titled *Thrive-in-Place*! Pastor Danny brought our attention to the conversation about spiritual growth found in Psalm 1:1-3 in order to help us figure out how we can thrive and not wither away during this shelter-in-place. Pastor Danny offers us some helpful tips to deepen our relationship with Christ during this season and challenges us to endure patiently, cling to Jesus, and trust that he is growing us!

“Even when fruit is not growing out of our lives, we can still flourish!”- Pastor Danny Strange

Suggested Questions

Check-In: Icebreaker – Over the *Thrive-in-Place* mini-series, we will be offering some fun Check-in questions to lighten the mood! Since we spoke a lot about trees this week, share some of your fondest memories that involve trees! (Alternative: which type of tree do you appreciate the most and why?)

Study Tip: In the Hebrew Bible, the book of Psalms introduces the *Ketuvim* (writings) section. Prior to the formation of the New Testament, the Hebrew scriptures consisted of the *Torah* (law), *Nevi'im* (prophets), and the *Ketuvim* (writings). When put together, the first syllables of each Hebrew word forms what you may have heard as the *TaNak*. Therefore, Psalm 1 not only acts as the introduction to Psalms, but it is also the introduction to the entire *Ketuvim*. One fascinating comparison is between the introduction of the *Ketuvim* (writings) in Psalms and the introduction of the *Nevi'im* (prophets) in Joshua. In Joshua 1:1-9, we find God reminding Joshua to meditate on the law of Moses day and night so that he might thrive alongside of God. Additionally, the Hebrew Bible would have just concluded the *Nevi'im* (prophets) with Malachi before launching into Psalms. In Malachi 4, we find the prophet speaking of the Lord's judgment, the thriving believer, another encouragement to remember the law of Moses, and the coming of a great prophet! As you think through Psalm 1, consider the importance of meditating on God's word day and night considering that when you **delight** in the *Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms*, you will find your heart growing for Jesus (Lk. 24:44)!

- **Objective #1: Identify the different aspects of what it means to *thrive*.**

Primary Texts: Psalm 1:1-6 – Pastor Danny begins the sermon by pointing out that many of us are working desperately hard to thrive. However, we are still finding that much of what we do is exhausting and not accomplishing what we had hoped for this season. Based on your experience over the shelter-in-place season, do you feel like you are in a season of *thriving* or *withering away*? What are some of the key indicators in your life that tell you whether you are thriving or withering away?

Supporting Texts: (Thrive) Deut. 28:1-14; Josh 1:7-9; Matt. 11:28-30; Jn. 10:10;

- **Objective #2: Press into avoiding destructive tendencies and desiring God more.**

Primary Texts: Psalm 1:1-2 – Next, Pastor Danny gives us two principles from the first two verses of the Psalm: (1) stay away from destructive things and (2) flourishing begins with a growing desire for the Lord before we experience behavioral changes. How do these two principles resonate with you right now? What are some creative ways that you want to grow your desire for God and reengage with spiritual things during this season?

Supporting Texts: (Destructive Behavior) SKIM Duet. 28:15-68; Prov. 7:1-27; Rom. 6:1-23; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:12-20; Eph. 5:1-21; Tit. 3:1-11; 1 Pet. 5:8 (Desire God) Deut. 30:6; Ps. 37:1-9; Ezk. 36:24-31; Col. 3:1-17; 2 Tim. 3:1-17; Heb. 12:1-3

- **Objective #3: Pray for thriving in place / hope for the future season.**

Primary Texts: Psalm 1:3 – Finally, Pastor Danny encourages those who may not be experiencing fruit in their lives by pointing out that, just like trees, each of us are experiencing different seasons. When you think about your life, would you say that you are in the Winter, Spring, Summer, or Fall? How can we pray for (1) thriving in the season that you are in? (2) hope in the season that is ahead of you?

Supporting Texts: (Fruit) Amos 9:8-15; Lk. 13:6-9; Jn. 15:1-17; Gal. 5:13-26 (Seasons) Eccl. 3:1-11

Closing Prayer: (5-10 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.

Thank Jesus for being the king over all things! Ask that the Holy Spirit would reveal to us how God is trying to work in us through this challenging time! Finally, pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to transform our minds so that we can set our thoughts on obeying Jesus and seeking the promise of eternal life as we walk through this COVID-19 season.

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

-Further Reading and Exploration: *Read 1st and 2nd Samuel* Many of us can relate to the many ups and the downs of the Psalms. However, it might be beneficial to understand what is happening in the life of King David in order to fully grasp the emotional depth within the collection of prayers, praises, and worship melodies, the majority (73) of which are written by King David! As you read these historical accounts of David's life, keep track of the key events that affect the trajectory of David's life on a separate sheet of paper and be ready to apply them to your next reading of the Psalms!

-Stay up to date with Coronavirus Ministry Opportunities: Help us out by pointing the people in your Community Group to 3Crosses.org/coronavirus. If you or anyone in your group is looking to serve food in our pantry, access spiritual care, or seek financial assistance, you can find all you need at 3Crosses.org/neighborhood

-Extend an invite to Alpha! Are you, or is anyone around you, craving community and seeking answers to life's most difficult questions during this time? Check out our new 3Crosses Alpha course designed to welcome the voices of anyone with questions or doubts about the Christian faith. Learn more at 3Crosses.org/alpha and feel free to invite the skeptic in your life along with you starting *Wednesday Nights at 7:30 pm*

- Find out how to pray for two people in your group this week! Pray that the members of your group would see God growing their faith as they endure this season and make us more dependent on Him!