

Questions for

GROUP DISCUSSION

Thrive

THE SINGLE LIFE AS GOD INTENDED

Introduction

You were Made for More

Welcome friends! I'm excited to begin this journey with you! Writing *Thrive* has been the highlight of my life – and I'm not exaggerating, although you will find out soon enough that I have a flare for drama!

I've tried to formulate questions that pertain to you whether you are single now or know someone who is single. The goal of the discussion questions is to make it easier for you to apply the truths of God's word to your lives!

If you're ready, let's roll! The intro questions are meant to help you get to know the members of your group better.

1. *Whether you're single or married, what has your experience with singleness been?*
2. *What are some expectations you have as you begin reading Thrive?*
3. *If you're comfortable, tell your "sad single story" to the group.*
4. *How would you describe a life that thrives? Is your life thriving? Why or why not?*
5. *Take some time to pray as a group asking the Lord to reveal Himself to you through Thrive.*

Chapter 1:

No Exchanges No Returns: the Gift of Singleness

Well we're underway and I hope you've enjoyed this first chapter on singleness. The stage is set. We're going to be spending some time in 1 Corinthians 7 talking about gifts. I hope you're ready.

1. *Has anyone ever accused you of having the gift of singleness? How did that make you feel?*
2. *Describe some gifts that you have received that you absolutely hated but later found useful.*
3. *Does the idea of singleness as a gift upset you? Does it create some tension in your faith in God? How?*
4. *Singleness is not plan B. You are not a sloppy left-over. What do you think of these statements? Have you ever felt like you're living plan B?*
5. *Do you know who you are in Christ? What did you learn from this chapter about your identity in Christ?*
6. *Have you ever received God's gift of his son Jesus? Tell your group about it.*

Chapter 2:

I Can't Find No Satisfaction: Learning Contentment

Contentment is not the resignation of the hopeless. It is the bold affirmation that my Father knows best. Contentment is a struggle for most of us, regardless of our marital status! I'm praying that you find true satisfaction in Christ alone as you discuss this chapter.

1. *"You cannot thrive in your Christian life without contentment". Do you agree or disagree and why?*
2. *Lina listed several seasons of discontent that singles face. Did her categories surprise you? Which season has been particularly difficult for you?*
3. *There are many reasons for our discontent. Think about your life. As you consider times when you've been discontent, where has your focus been?*
4. *Have you ever worried that becoming content would somehow send God the wrong message that you're ok with the circumstances you've been dealt?*
5. *Lina discusses 4 steps to contentment. List them. Now honestly consider which steps you need help with.*
6. *Contentment is satisfaction with God's sufficient provision. Do you believe that?*

Chapter 3:

Oops I Did it Again: Choosing Self-Control

This chapter is going to call for some honesty. Are you willing to do it? You won't begin to change until you take that first scary step and choose to be authentic about where you're at in the battle for self-control.

1. *Did you appreciate Lina's openness and honesty in discussing the sex chapter?*
2. *Have you ever struggled with lust and how has that played out in your life?*
3. *What kinds of lies have you believed about lust?*
4. *The idea that you must exercise self-control or get married can be frustrating for singles. Have you ever blamed God for not providing for your needs? How did that negatively affected your battle with self-control?*
5. *I hate to force you to be specific, but if you're going to gain victory in the area of lust, you need to start by being completely honest with one another. Look at Lina's common areas of struggle in lust and isolate the ones that you have battled with the most.*
6. *What are some practical steps you need to take to gain permanent victory? Ask someone in your group to hold you accountable. Today is your chance to start the dance towards permanent victory! There is nothing like living freely by grace!*

Chapter 4:

Holy Rollers and the Church Ladies: Embracing Holiness as a lifestyle

There's nothing like having nothing between our Lord and our Savior. Holiness has a way of getting a bad rep for many Christians, yet it is God's will for every one of his followers. How are you doing in the area of holiness? Let's find out as we discuss this chapter in *Thrive*.

1. *Try defining holiness. Who do you think of when you think about holiness?*
2. *How have you misunderstood holiness in the past? Has holiness seemed unattainable to you?*
3. *How did this chapter help you realize that holiness is for you! It's not just for your pastor!*
4. *How can you make remove for holiness in your life?*
5. *Lina mentions that there are 1440 minutes in a day, and 10,080 minutes in a week. How many of them do you spend concentrating on holiness?*
6. *What are some practical ways you can increase your time focused on the Lord?*

Chapter 5:

Free as a Bird: Understanding True Freedom

The 5th attitude to embrace on the road to thriving is Freedom! This is by far my favorite attitude! Are you living like you're free? If not - let's find out how by God's grace, you can!

1. *Do you tend to be too independent or not independent enough?*
2. *Have you ever considered the added blessings that the freedom of singleness brings?*
3. *Paul tells us that we have been freed from 5 specific things. What are they and which of them has been struggle for you?*
4. *What are some things that you have been able to do as a single person that you could not have done if you were married?*
5. *Is there anything you'd love to do in order to thrive as a single person?*
6. *What is keeping you from doing it?*

Chapter 6:

Single Minded Focus: Pursuing Undivided Devotion

We're all over-worked and over-stimulated. In this chapter, let's simplify and focus in on single minded devotion on the Lord Jesus Christ. It sounds too good to be true, but it's ours for the taking!

1. *Lina started the chapter by getting out the GPS and recalibrating. Let's do this right now. We're halfway through the book. How are you doing? Are you learning new things? Are you starting to understand the life that thrives?*
2. *"Paul's focus was single minded because he never forgot what Jesus Christ had done for him." Take some time and remember all that Christ has done for you.*
3. *What are some of the things that distract you from pursuing undivided devotion in your pursuit of Jesus?*
4. *How is your devotion to Scripture? To Prayer? To Good works and urgent needs? To the Church?*
5. *What are some practical steps you can take in order to ensure a more focused walk with the Lord?*

Chapter 7:

Me myself and I: Defeating Self-Pity

We've covered 5 attitudes to embrace so far in *Thrive*. It's time to move to the 4 obstacles to overcome. We're going to start by talking about self-pity. "Self-pity is easily the most destructive of the non-pharmaceutical narcotics; it is addictive, gives momentary pleasure and separates the victim from reality". Ouch. Let's hit it!

1. *How did you feel when you read Lina's battle with self-pity?*
2. *Have you ever struggled with self-pity? Are you there right now?*
3. *What signs and symptoms of self-pity are you very familiar with?*
4. *Which of the triggers of self-pity have trapped you most frequently?*
5. *When you fall prey to self-pity, what kinds of sins do you tend to revert to?*
6. *Name some of the truths you learned from this chapter that will help you defeat self-pity. Doesn't it sound heavenly to live without falling into the pit of self-pity? It's possible by God's grace. I'm praying it for you!*

Chapter 8:

Soul Killer: Uprooting Bitterness

Bitterness starts small and grows fast. It can take over anyone's life! In this chapter, we saw how it almost took over Lina's life. Now it's time to focus on yourself. Is bitterness slowly killing your soul? Let's discuss how to uproot this obstacle to thriving.

1. *Disappointments can often lead to bitterness. Describe how that may be true in your life.*
2. *Review the signs that you may be bitter. Are you familiar with any?*
3. *Consider the lies that bitterness believes. Have you ever felt wronged by other people?*
4. *When God can do something about your circumstances and doesn't, it's easy to feel wronged by God, leading to bitterness. Have you ever felt let down by God? How did you respond?*
5. *It's time to get over bitterness. What must you let go of today in order to be free of bitterness? Prayerfully commit these things to the Lord.*

Chapter 9:

Joy Stealer: Destroying Idolatry

This was the hardest chapter for me to write. I struggled with the level of honesty I should provide, but was convinced that until we become completely honest with one another about the idols in our hearts, we will not be free of them. God wants us to worship him alone. This chapter discussion may be the hardest one yet, but I promise you that if you are willing to surrender your idols and allow Christ's light to fill your hearts, you will be free. Let's do this together!

1. *Define an idol. Give some examples of modern day idols.*
2. *What are the top 1-2 idols in your life? Check Lina's list under "diagnosing idolatry in your heart."*
3. *As a single person, perhaps you identify with Lina's struggle with the idols of sex and appearances. Why don't you use her example to help you step out of your own idolatry and move into a new place of freedom.*
4. *Why do you think God hates idols?*
5. *Destroying your idol will demand a battle. What are you willing to do to be free? Make some clear decisions today. Be willing to pay the price. Trust God to make a way out!*

Chapter 10:

Never Alone: Rejecting the Lie of Loneliness

It's impossible to live your life without ever experiencing loneliness. Of course, as a single Christian, the struggle is up close and personal. I know the feeling of loneliness more than I care to admit. But God has promised His presence near us always. Don't you want to live with an awareness of his nearness daily? It's possible! It starts by rejecting the lie of loneliness.

1. *When do you feel lonely?*
2. *What do you do when you're lonely?*
3. *What should you do when you're lonely?*
4. *Make a list of God's promises that will encourage you when you're lonely.*
5. *Does it help you to know that other Christians get lonely? That you're not alone in this?*

Chapter 11:

All you Need is Love: Finding True Love in Christ

We've come a long way so far! We started our journey towards thriving by identifying some attitudes to embrace, then we discussed the obstacles to overcome. Now it's time to finally make it happen! This week we're talking about love. Are you ready for love?

1. *Lina asked 2 critical questions in this chapter: "Why would God create you to love and not provide an object for your love? And What kind of God would place in you a longing for oneness with another being, and leave you hanging?" Take some time to answer these questions.*
2. *Have you found true love in Christ?*
3. *It's critical to trust God's character in order to thrive. Lina covered 4 aspects of God's character to hang on to in difficult circumstances. Which impacted you the most?*
4. *Eventually, you've got to get onto God's program for relationships. How is the single Christian to find thriving relationships in a world made for couples?*
5. *Whether you're single or married, what are some specific ways you can minister to other single people in your church family?*

Chapter 12:

Hit the Road Jack: Executing the life that thrives

Can you believe we're coming up on the last chapter of *Thrive*? I hope you've enjoyed reading this book as much as I've loved writing it. Let's finish strong. Let's kill our lame excuses and do the life that thrives! Are you with me?

1. *What are some excuses that will keep you from thriving?*
2. *"I don't know where to start" is a common obstacle to executing the life that thrives. Brainstorm some starting points for you towards the life that thrives!*
3. *Consider the parable of the fig tree in Luke 13:6-9. Review the 4 principles discussed in this chapter about fruit bearing and thriving.*
4. *Which of the 4 principles spoke to you the most? How can God use your "manure" to bear much fruit in your life?*
5. *So...are you ready to hit the road, jane?*

Conclusion

Not just pie in the sky: Real life examples of Thriving

As you conclude *Thrive*: the single life as God intended, take some time to celebrate all that God has done in your life through this book. And if you don't mind, I'd love to hear from you! Email me at lina@livingwithpower.org, or visit livingwithpower.org/Thrive. I'd love to hear your story!

You are loved!