



## Week 1 - Group Discussion

1

**Welcome to the first Grow group.**

This should take about 60 to 90 minutes.

I'm going to read a quick prayer:

*"God, thank you for this group of people. We want to grow closer to you. Guide our conversation, make this a safe place for openness and fun. Amen."*

And off we grow.

2

Introduce yourself to the group.

1. What's your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. Why are you doing this journey?

Everyone has 1 minute to share.

3

It's time for a quick challenge. Each person, choose a topic below. Once you tap it, you'll be delivered a prompt to answer that relates to that topic. Choose wisely, there's no going back! Go around the group in alphabetical order by middle name.

## TOPICS:

1. Pet Related Stuff
2. Trains, Planes, and Automobiles
3. Gardening
4. Highfalutin Foods
5. Ball Sports
6. Knitting with Grandma
7. Spotify Playlist
8. Philosophical Mumbo Jumbo

### **Pet Related Stuff**

Consider the entire animal kingdom; house pets, farm animals, and wild animals. What is the craziest interaction you've ever had with an animal? Could be a funny pet story or that time you were mauled by a bear.

### **Trains, Planes, and Automobiles**

What is the farthest point from where you are currently sitting that you have traveled and what is one thing that surprised you about that location?

### **Gardening**

What fruit or vegetable reminds you of your childhood and why?

### **Highfalutin Foods**

You've eaten a lot of meals in your life. Describe one of your most memorable and why that one stands out.

### **Ball Sports**

Describe a sporting event that you've attended, heard about, played in, or watched on TV that left a lasting memory.

### **Knitting with Grandma**

What do you most admire about your grandparents?

### **Spotify Playlist**

If you could be the lead singer for any band (current or past), which band would you choose? How does that choice connect with your personality?

### **Philosophical Mumbo Jumbo**

You find yourself in a dark hallway 50 yards from the only exit. Standing between you and that exit door is either one cougar or 100 angry Canadian geese. Which would you rather fight in that hallway? Defend your answer.

4

### **Group Ground Rules**

Groups run more smoothly if we all agree to a few important ground rules. I'll read them, you give me a thumbs up if you're onboard:

1. I'll listen instead of trying to solve others' problems
2. I'll be open and honest
3. I'll listen to the weekend teaching, do my individual challenges, and show up for this group
4. I'll avoid dominating this conversation
5. I'll keep everything shared in this group confidential

Thumbs up? Great.

5

What stood out from the weekend teaching?

Everyone answers, 1 minute each.

6

Everyone answer one of the following:

1. How do you best connect with God?
2. Describe a time when you think God might have been trying to get your attention.

7

This week in your guide you were challenged to do at least two activities to help you spend time with God. What did you do, why did you choose it, and how did it go? Share successes and failures. Everyone's different, and that's ok.

If you haven't done it, no sweat. What do you plan to do and when? Everyone answer.

8

Matthew 4:4 says *"But he answered, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

Spend a few minutes as a group discussing what you think that means.

9

Think about your next three months. What is a new way you could connect with God daily? It should be something you look forward to. Something fun, exciting, or challenging. Everyone, discuss ways you could make connecting with God daily more of a habit. Use this time as a brainstorming session.

10

Now make it personal. In the back of your guide is a poster that can be a plan for growth. Go around the group, everyone fill in the blank:

"Over the next few months, I'll carve out time to connect with God by \_\_\_\_\_."

11

You did it. If you're out of time, then this group is done.

If you have extra time and want to keep going, there are three bonus questions for the group.

Decide together if you want to keep going.

## BONUS QUESTIONS

1. Describe a time you feel like you heard specifically from God. What were the circumstances? What was it like? What did you do? (It's cool if you

don't have an answer, feel free to just listen to others, or say "I don't know.")

2. Describe the most significant "spiritual experience" you've ever had.
3. On a scale of 1-10, where do you feel like you are in your relationship with God? What would need to be true in order to move that scale?

END

That's it. Don't miss the weekend teaching and make sure to keep doing the individual work. Each week this group will hold you accountable for staying on track.

OH! And, if we stay together as a group and do our group guide 4 times, Crossroads is going to send us some kind of sweet surprise. SO MYSTERIOUS!

See you next week.

# Week 2 - Group Discussion

1

Welcome back, everyone. Would someone be willing to say a quick prayer for our time?

2

Here's a quick reminder of our group ground rules:

1. Listen instead of solving others' problems
2. Be open and honest
3. Fully participate
4. Avoid dominating the conversation
5. Keep things confidential

Can I get a quick thumbs up?

Onward.

3

It's choose your own adventure time. Choose a topic to reveal your question. Read your question to the group and then answer. Go around the group in this order: the person wearing the newest pair of shoes to oldest.

1. The Student Has Become the Master
2. I Heart Podcasts
3. I Heart My Public Library
4. Back To School
5. TikTok Life Hacks
6. Now That I'm Not a Kid
7. Lookin' For Help

## **The Student Has Become the Master**

What is your favorite way to learn about a new topic and what is an example of something you've learned recently?

### **I Heart Podcasts**

What's one of your favorite podcasts right now? Give a 10-second elevator pitch on why everyone else should listen to it. Bonus points if you impersonate the host as you pitch.

### **I Heart My Public Library**

What's a non-fiction book (or article) you've read recently and what did you learn?

### **Back to School**

Describe a great teacher you had. What made them great?

### **Life Hack**

What's the best life hack you've learned from YouTube or TikTok?

### **Now That I'm Not a Kid**

What did you believe as a kid that you don't believe now?

### **Lookin' For Help**

Where do you go when you need to solve a complex problem?

4

Talk about the weekend teaching. Discuss anything that stood out or felt like it hit home for you.

Spend up to 5 minutes talking about this as a group.

5

Romans 12:2 says *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."*

Describe a time you were inspired to live differently based on something you learned.

Discuss for 5 minutes as a group.

6

You identified a learning style in your guide on page 36. Lightning round: everybody share which style you most identify with—visual learner, auditory learner, or learns by reading.

7

The individual guide had you explore a new topic, and on page 40 and 41 you took notes. Everyone go around the group and share what you learned.

8

Jesus often used stories to teach. Matthew 13:3-8 is a famous example.

*And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

9

This also happens to be one of the few times Jesus explained what he meant. Now read Matthew 13:18-23.

*"Hear then the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it."*



*He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”*

10

What from that teaching challenges you?

Take a few minutes as a group to discuss.

11

Think about the next 3 months. What is one Biblical concept you’d like to learn more about? Why? Everyone answer.

While each person answers, if you have a suggestion on where to look for answers, suggest those. Make it a conversation.

12

By the way, that thing you just discussed, you can go ahead and jot that down on your Growth Plan poster. Consider following up with someone sitting in this group right now and sharing what you learned.

13

OK, we’re done. Maybe.

If you have extra time and want to keep going, there are two bonus questions for the group.

Decide together if you want to keep going.

[Yes, bring on the bonus questions.]

[No bonus this time.]

**BONUS QUESTIONS**

1. The churchy word “repentance” simply means to “turn away from.” If I learn I’m driving the wrong direction, Google Maps tells me to recalculate (repent) and make a U-turn. Based on everything you’ve learned this week (or recently), do you feel like God might be prompting you to “repent”? Share anything that comes to mind. There are no wrong answers.
2. Someone look up Matthew 5:1-11 and read it out loud. This is one of Jesus’ most famous teachings. What stands out most to you? Is there anything you think Jesus might be trying to teach you personally? Is there anything you can apply to your life right now? Make this a discussion of whatever comes to mind.

END

That’s it. Don’t miss the weekend teaching and make sure to keep doing the individual work.

We’ve logged two group times, which puts us two group times away from some super sweet mysterious group reward!

See you next week.

# Week 3 - Group Discussion

1

Hi group. Someone say a quick prayer and we'll dive in.

2

Take a few minutes and discuss anything that stood out to you from this past weekend's teaching.

3

Stories are powerful, that's why we love TV shows. Everyone share a show you're watching right now that you love and why you love it.

4

Mystery question time. Choose a topic below and then answer the question you're served. Go around the group in this order: the person with the most to fewest pets living in their home.

1. I Have Recently Shared My Faith Story With Another Human
2. I Heard a Story That CHANGED Me
3. I Have Good or Exciting News To Share Right Now
4. I Think This Might Have Been A Miracle

## **I Have Recently Shared My Faith Story With Another Human**

Oh you did, did you? Please tell the group what sharing your personal faith story was like. Who'd you share it with? How did they respond? Anything you'd do differently? Etc.

## **I Heard a Story That CHANGED Me**

Describe a time that someone else's story (any kind of story) had a deep impact on you.

## **I Have Good or Exciting News To Share Right Now**

The Bible says that everything good comes from God (James 1:17). What is something good or exciting happening in your life right now and how might that be something God is a part of? Tell the story.

### **I Think This Might Have Been A Miracle**

Sharing amazing things that God has done is one way to build faith in our own life and the lives of those around us. Share that thing you think might have been a God miracle.

5

In your guide this week you choose a template to write out your story. Everyone talk about which template they chose and how it went.

6

Now we're going to practice sharing our stories with each other. Here is how it will work:

1. Pair up with one other person. Odd number? Make one group of 3. If you're meeting virtually, use breakout rooms.
2. Each person take 5 minutes to share your story.
3. Listener, pay attention, you'll be sharing two things you learned about your partner with the larger group.
4. Go.

7

Go around the group and share two things you learned about your partner.

8

In Matthew 5:14 Jesus says that we're to be a light for the world around us. 1 Peter 3:15 says *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."*

Are there two volunteers who'd be willing to tackle this challenge? To tell the group why they have hope? By the way, your answer should go deeper than just "because of Jesus."

Each brave soul will get 3 minutes.

9

Whether you consider yourself a follower of Jesus or not, you have a faith story. For 30 seconds, sit quietly and ask God to give you a name of someone who is open, receptive, and hasn't heard your story.

I'll read this quick prayer, *"Holy Spirit, you know who needs to hear my story. Please bring that person to mind. Amen."*

Now, 30 seconds of silence.

10

Tell the group who came to mind and why.

11

Time to get practical. Consider a strategy for getting time with that person in the next three months. As accountability, tell the group what you plan to do. By the way, you can also write this on your poster.

12

Sharing your story can feel weird. Let's end with a simple encouragement prayer. Go around the group and pray for the person next to you. It can be as simple as this: *"God, be with \_\_\_\_\_, give them the courage and opportunity to share their story with \_\_\_\_\_. Amen."*

13

Ok, unless we want some bonus questions, this group is done.

[Sure, Bonus Us.]

[That's a No on Bonus.]

**BONUS ROUND**

1. Think about some places you go frequently (the gym, work, your favorite coffee shop or brewery). Brainstorm ideas together about how you could start sharing your story in those places.
2. The Crossroads App that you're reading this in now includes a "Share Your Story" section. Basically, it's a way to let your friends and the broader Crossroads community hear about the good things God is doing in our world. Discuss whether you have something you could share. Would you feel comfortable sharing it? Why or why not? Nudge, nudge. Maybe you should do it.

END

That's it. Don't miss the weekend teaching this week.

We are now one group meeting away from being eligible for the top secret journey surprise. The suspense, unbearable.

See you next week.

# Week 4 - Group Discussion

1

Welcome to group 4. Someone say a quick prayer and we'll get started.

2

Last week was all about sharing our story and being a light. What's the best light on this list?

- Christmas lights
- Sun light
- Fire light
- Black light
- Miller Lite

3

This week we're discussing baptism. DISCLAIMER: Baptism is a big decision and no one in this group will have answers to all of the questions. After the group time, if anyone has specific questions, use the chat feature at [crossroads.net](http://crossroads.net).

4

We're 4 weeks into this 5 week journey toward spiritual growth. How is it going? Use this time to discuss how your time with God is going. Did you lean into teaching in a new way? What about story sharing? Any wins? The floor is open, discuss anything you think God might be trying to teach you or places he's trying to get your attention.

5

Take a few minutes and discuss anything that stood out to you from this past weekend teaching.

## 6

Matthew 28:18-20 is known as The Great Commission, some of the last words Jesus gave his followers. It says:

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Why do you think baptism is so central to Jesus' directions? Use this time to discuss as a group.

## 7

What did you learn by going through the prompts in your guide this week? Use this time to process, tell your story, share where you are coming from as it relates to baptism.

## 8

Now it's a choose your own adventure based on where you stand with the baptism question. Choose the heading that best fits you, tell the group which one you chose, and then react to the prompt you're given. Go around the group in this order: the fastest to slowest swimmer.

1. I've Been Baptized
2. I've Not Been Baptized, but I'm Considering
3. I Was Baptized as an Infant/Child, but I'm Considering as an Adult
4. I'm Not Interested in Being Baptized

### **I've Been Baptized**

1. Tell the group why you decided to get baptized.
2. Baptism is about being fully surrendered to Jesus. Are there any areas in your life that you feel like you need to more fully surrender?

### **I've Not Been Baptized, but I'm Considering**



Describe some of the things you wrestle with when considering the idea of baptism. Remember, no one in the group is going to be an expert, but this is a safe place to process your thinking.

### **I Was Baptized as an Infant/Child, but I'm Considering as an Adult**

What is holding you back from making the decision to be baptized? Remember, no one in the group is a baptism expert, but use this group as a place to process how you're thinking about it.

### **I'm Not Interested In Being Baptized**

Baptism, like any commitment, is a big decision. Knowing this isn't the right next step is a really mature and honest place to be. Feel free to talk about how you're processing this week in the Journey (if you haven't already), or simply say "pass." No judgment.

9

If baptism is the right next step for anyone in this group, sign up to be baptized at a Crossroads site this coming weekend at [crossroads.net/baptism](http://crossroads.net/baptism). (10/16)

10

Lastly, next week is our last group meeting. We'll be discussing the importance of community. One of the best ways to forge meaningful relationships is through shared experiences. So, instead of—or in addition to—sitting around and talking, we're going to do something fun together. There are a bunch of ideas on pages 86 and 87 of your guide. Decide the following two things right now:

1. What is something fun we could do next week as a group?
2. When will we do it? It could happen during this group time OR it might need to happen at a different time.

11

That's it, time for bonus questions?

[Yes, bring on the bonus questions.]

[Good grief no, look at the time!]

## **BONUS QUESTIONS**

1. Luke 14:28 says *“For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?”* Why is Jesus telling his disciples to count the cost?  
What do you think it “costs” to follow Jesus? Discuss as a group.
2. Ephesians 2:8 says *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

A gift is useless unless the recipient opens it. What does it look like for you to receive the gift of grace this week?

END

Good work. Don't forget, sign up at [crossroads.net/baptism](http://crossroads.net/baptism) if anyone is taking that step! Don't miss it!

# Week 5 - Host Only

1

Thank you for leading a Grow Journey Group. Remember, the final group is all about doing something fun together. If for whatever reason the planning of that falls through, here is a simple back up plan: Host the group as usual but spend time going through the conversation prompts on page 89 of your guide. Maybe provide a special drink and snack. Lastly, talk about what is next for the group. Community is super important, but it's also totally cool if this group needs to come to an end. Just be clear. Clarity is kind.

2

The data nerds working in the back room of Crossroads would love to know the answer to the question below. Choose the answer that best fits. And thank you again for hosting.

When it comes to the future of this journey group:

We're going to keep meeting together.

It was great while it lasted, but we're ending this group.

We're not going to meet any longer, but I'd love to find a new group.

3

That's it. Thank you again for stepping up to host.