SERIES COMMUNITY GUIDE

THRIVE LA CHURCH

January to February 2026

How to Use This Guide

Over the next four weeks, our church will walk through Psalm 37, a wisdom psalm that teaches us how to trust
God over time.
Week 1: Decide on the destination you want to go - good life is found with Jesus.
Week 2: Set the path
Week 3: Reject greed, embrace generosity, avoid debt which leads to freedom on the path.
Week 4: Get a mentor, invest in healthy relationships - gives you a wealth no one can take away.

Each week there will be a discussion guide AND a worksheet to do as a group.

This guide is designed to help small groups reflect on the sermon and create tangible practices that lead to a life oriented toward Jesus.

Watch the Sermon

In Person on Sundays at 10am: 2234 W Temple St, Los Angeles, CA 90026 Online Live on Sundays at 10am: thrivela.online.church
Archived: thrivelachurch.com/media

Gather Weekly

We have multiple Thrive Groups throughout Los Angeles and Online. We encourage our groups meeting in person to share a meal together.

Discussion

In your groups you will discuss the week's sermon and Bible readings with reflection/discussion questions designed to help you go deeper.

Join or Start a Group

Go to thrivelachurch.com/thrivegroups or Text "Groups" to 323- 709-0711 to be placed in a group and to learn more.

Week 1: Contentment in Christ

week of January 11th

Psalm 37:1-4

Psalm 37 opens with an invitation that feels especially countercultural in our world of constant comparison and striving. Rather than telling us how to get ahead or keep up, the psalm calls us to trust in the Lord, delight in Him, and resist the urge to measure our lives against others.

Psalm 37 asks us to slow down and name our destination. What are we aiming our lives toward? Where do we believe happiness, security, or fulfillment will come from?

Contentment in Christ does not mean settling for less — it means rooting our joy in Someone who cannot be taken from us.

Opening Question:

What was a highlight in your life from the last month?

Bible Reading:

Psalm 37:1-4

Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to delight yourself in the Lord?
- Where are we tempted to look for happiness or security apart from God?
- How does comparison steal joy or distort our sense of direction?
- What might it look like to enjoy God, not just obey Him?

Activity:

Introduce the "Building a Life in the Direction of Jesus" Worksheet. Every week for this series, we are going to do worksheets together that will help us pause, reflect, and write down some observations. At the end of Week 4, we will each review our personal worksheets, and create a SMART goal - a tangible goal and action steps towards a thriving life with Jesus.

Take 5-8 minutes for everyone to fill out Section 1.

Encourage reflection, not overthinking or shame. This is about noticing what's already shaping our desires.

After a few minutes, invite people to share (as they feel comfortable):

- One desire they see influencing their life
- One area where God may be inviting them to trust Him more deeply

Personal Spiritual Practice:

Practice a comparison fast this week (social media, internal comparison, or both).

Daily prayer: *"Lord, teach me to delight in You."*

Week 2: Commitment to Christ

week of January 18th

Psalm 37:5-13

After naming our destination in Week 1, Psalm 37 now turns toward the *path*. Contentment in Christ is not passive; it requires intentional trust, patience, and obedience over time.

This week, the psalm invites us to commit our way to the Lord, to resist rushing ahead of God, and to remain faithful even when others seem to succeed faster or easier.

Vv.5-13 remind us that formation happens slowly. Trust grows as we learn when to move forward, when to wait, and when to refrain from reacting in fear or anger. This week will guide us to discern what faithfulness looks like right now - not someday.

Opening Question:

What is something in your life that feels difficult to wait for right now?

Bible Reading:

Psalm 37:5-13

Discussion Questions:

- Any reflections from the spiritual practice of fasting from comparison this past week?
- What stands out to you about the words *commit*, *trust*, *be still*, and *wait*?
- Why is waiting often harder than acting?
- How can anger, comparison, or worrying pull us off course?
- What helps you stay faithful when progress feels slow?

Activity:

Take 8-10 minutes for everyone to fill out Section 2 of the worksheet.

Encourage reflection, not overthinking. This is about noticing what's already shaping their desires.

After a few minutes, invite people to share (as they feel comfortable):

- One area where they sense God inviting them to *go*
- One place where God may be asking them to *wait*
- One reaction or habit they may need to *refrain* from

Personal Spiritual Practice:

What's one small habit that you can practice this week that reflects trust in God? Some ideas: prayer, rest, saying no, asking for help, slowing down, Sabbath. *Choose one to practice.*

Closing Prayer

Spend two minutes in silence before God. Invite people to pray aloud. *Amen.*

Week 3: Financial Freedom

week of January 25th

Psalm 37:14-27

Vv.14-27 speak honestly about money, possessions, and power - and it does so without shame or fear. Scripture consistently teaches that finances are not just practical concerns, but spiritual formation issues. How we use money reveals what we trust and what we value.

This week explores the freedom that comes from contentment, generosity, and integrity. Psalm 37 reminds us that wealth without righteousness leads to anxiety and harm, while trusting God with what we have - whether much or little - leads to lasting security.

(These verses allude to themes of living within means, budgeting, saving, staying out of debt, investing, and rejecting greed.)

Opening Question:

If you won the lottery, what would you do with it?

Bible Reading:

Psalm 37:14-27

Discussion Questions:

- Any reflections from the spiritual practice of trusting God this past week?
- Why do you think Scripture connects money with righteousness and peace?
- How does comparison influence financial decisions?
- In what ways can generosity increase freedom rather than decrease it?
- What does trusting God with finances look like in everyday life?

Activity:

Take 8-10 minutes for everyone to fill out Section 3 of the worksheet. *Attached is also an optional budgeting resource for people to utilize on their own time if they would like.*

Reassure the group: "This is not about budgets or numbers or shame - it's about noticing, learning, and growing in the ways of Jesus that lead to freedom, trust, and peace."

Invite participants to reflect on:

- What "enough" looks like
- Where finances create pressure or anxiety
- One small step toward generosity or freedom

Personal Spiritual Practice:

Practice gratitude daily this week, in thanking God for what you have.

Closing Prayer

Invite everyone to silently name one financial concern before God.
Close by thanking God aloud for His provision and faithfulness.
Amen.

Week 4: Life-Giving Relationships

week of February 1st

Psalm 37:28-40, esp v.37

Psalm 37 closes by pointing us toward people. Wisdom, stability, and peace are not formed in isolation, but in community. Scripture invites us to observe the blameless, learn from the upright, and seek peace in our relationships.

This week focuses on the people who shape our faith - mentors, peers, and those we are called to invest in. Psalm 37 reminds us that relationships are our greatest wealth, and that peacemaking is not optional for those who want a future marked by life and faithfulness.

Opening Question:

Who has had a meaningful influence on your faith journey?

Bible Reading:

Psalm 37:37

Discussion Questions:

- Any reflections from the spiritual practice of daily gratitude this week?
- Why does Scripture invite us to observe and learn from the faithful?
- How do relationships shape the direction of our lives?
- What is the difference between peacekeeping and peacemaking?

Activity:

Have participants complete Sections 4 on the worksheet for 5-8 min. Then come back and share:

- People who help them walk toward Jesus
- People who walk alongside them
- People God may be inviting them to invest in
- One relationship where peace or reconciliation is needed

*** Ask everyone to complete the Section 5 Worksheet for homework. Next week will be a social night, and we are asking everyone to bring their Section 5 completed for discussion.

Personal Spiritual Practice:

Identify one relationship where God may be inviting you to pursue peace, reconciliation, or deeper investment.

Closing Prayer

Pray together: "Lord, make us people of peace." Thank God for the people He has placed in our lives and ask for wisdom as we walk together. *Amen.*

Building a Life in the Direction of Jesus

Psalm 37

This worksheet is meant to be used across the entire four-week series in Psalm 37. Each week focuses on a different area of life - direction, daily choices, finances, and relationships - and invites you to reflect on how these areas shape your walk with Jesus.

This guide invites you to slow down, notice, and reflect on your desires and actions - without shame or judgment, but within the loving embrace of Jesus. The goal is not perfection, but direction: learning to trust God over time as you walk with Him. This is a lifelong journey that begins today.

At the end of the four weeks, in Section 5, you'll reflect on what God has been stirring in you and identify one clear, realistic action that aligns your life more fully with the way of Jesus - not by fixing everything, but by choosing one faithful step forward.

Section 1: Destination - Delight Yourself in the Lord

Psalm 37:1-4

Where do I currently look for happiness, security, or worth?

_____

What feels most at stake for me if God doesn't show up the way I expect?

_____

What comparison most affects me?

_____

When I imagine a "good life," what images or outcomes come to mind?

_____

A life that delights in the Lord looks like:

_____

What is one thing I may need to release and trust God with in this season?

_____

One desire God may be reshaping in me:

_____

Section 2: Path - Commit Your Way to the Lord

Psalm 37:5-13

GO — Where might God be inviting me to take a step of faith?

_____

WAIT — Where do I need patience instead of control?

_____

REFRAIN — What habit, reaction, or pattern pulls me off course?

_____

What area of my life feels hardest to trust God with right now?

_____

What might trusting God look like here, even if the outcome doesn't change right away?

_____

Section 3: Finances - Better the Little with Righteousness

Psalm 37:14-27

When I think of money, what emotions come up in me?

_____

Where do I notice money creating pressure, comparison, or a sense of urgency in my life?

_____

What does "enough" look like for me in this season of life?

_____

Take a quick look at your recent spending (or think about what you've spent money on this week).

What do you notice about your habits, values, or patterns?

_____.

One step toward greater freedom (ex: investing, budgeting, saving, paying down debt, etc)

_____

One step toward greater generosity:

_____.

What questions do I have about finances? Who is a wise or trusted person I could ask for help or guidance?

_____.

**Attached to this guide is a budgeting resource you can explore in your own time. If you have additional questions, feel free to talk with a small group leader or someone on the leadership team. We care about you - including your finances - and are always happy to listen, answer questions, or help connect you with tools and support.*

Section 4: Relationships - A Future Awaits Those Who Seek Peace

Psalm 37:28-40

People who help me walk toward Jesus (mentors / models):

_____

What do I notice about them (mentors)?

_____

People who walk alongside me (peers):

_____

What do I notice about them (peers)?

_____

People God may be inviting me to invest in:

_____

One relationship where I need to pursue peace, reconciliation, or healing:

_____

What kind of presence do I want to be in my relationships - especially during conflict or tension?

_____

Section 5: Putting It All Together into *One* Faithful Next Step

Psalm 37 invites us to trust God with our lives, over time.

1. *Go back and reflect on Sections 1-4.*
2. *Then, instead of setting many goals at once, you're invited to choose one faithful, realistic step that aligns with the life God is forming in you.*
3. *Commit to taking this one small step, and practicing it regularly. (Lasting change most often happens through small, intentional actions practiced over time rather than trying to change everything at once.)*
4. *Finally, consider sharing this step with a trusted small group friend. Check in with one another for encouragement, prayer, accountability, and support along the journey.*

One area God is inviting me to focus on: (Destination, Path, Finances, or Relationships)

_____

My One Goal:

_____

Specific: What exactly will I do?

_____

Measurable: How will I know I followed through?

_____

Achievable: Is this realistic for my current season?

_____

Relevant: How does this move me toward Jesus?

_____

Time-Bound: When will I take this step?

_____

First Step I Will Take This Week:

_____

Who can support or pray for me?

_____

Closing Prayer:

Lord, help me trust You, walk in Your ways, and dwell with You as I take this next step.

Amen

A Simple Budgeting Tool

This budgeting tool is designed to help you notice where your money is going, align your spending with your values, and take small steps toward greater freedom and generosity. This is not about perfection or shame, but about trust, wisdom, and peace over time.

Contact a leader if you're interested in more resources.

1. Monthly Income

Source	Amount
Primary Income	
Secondary / Side Income	
Other	
Total Monthly Income	

2. Fixed Expenses (Monthly)

Category	Amount
Housing (Rent/Mortgage)	
Utilities	
Insurance	
Transportation	
Debt Payments	
Other Fixed Expenses	
Total Fixed Expenses	

3. Variable Expenses

Category	Monthly Estimate
Groceries	
Dining / Coffee	
Entertainment	
Personal / Misc.	
Other	
Total Variable Expenses	

4. Savings, Giving, and Future Planning

Category	Monthly Amount
Emergency Fund / Savings	
Investing / Retirement	
Generosity / Giving	
Other Future Goals	
Total Savings & Giving	

5. Monthly Summary

Summary	Amount
Total Monthly Income	
Total Monthly Spending	
Monthly Net (Income – Spending)	