



For the Week of June 3, 2012

Guest Speaker: Doug Fields  
Drawing Close to God

Life Notes for Missional Communities

for your personal growth

Guest speaker Doug Fields shared about refueling our relationship with God, so we'll have a time of refueling this week. We'll spend time alone with God and then we'll spend time with him in community. And we'll trust God to refuel us and strengthen our relationship with him.

Remember to journal when you have the time and opportunity - there's so much you can learn through the experience of recording what you hear God saying to your heart.

the Word: Psalm 139

O Lord, you have searched me  
and you know me.  
You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.  
Before a word is on my tongue  
you know it completely, O Lord.

You hem me in —behind and before;  
you have laid your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?  
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.  
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,  
even there your hand will guide me,  
your right hand will hold me fast.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"  
even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

For you created my inmost being;  
 you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
 your works are wonderful,  
 I know that full well.

My frame was not hidden from you  
 when I was made in the secret place.  
 When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,  
 your eyes saw my unformed body.

All the days ordained for me  
 were written in your book  
 before one of them came to be.

How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!  
 How vast is the sum of them!  
 Were I to count them,  
 they would outnumber the grains of sand.  
 When I awake,  
 I am still with you.

If only you would slay the wicked, O God!  
 Away from me, you bloodthirsty men!  
 They speak of you with evil intent;  
 your adversaries misuse your name.

Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord,  
 and abhor those who rise up against you?  
 I have nothing but hatred for them;  
 I count them my enemies.

Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
 test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
 See if there is any offensive way in me,  
 and lead me in the way everlasting.

### missional community suggestion

Facilitators: if possible, ask your community members to come prepared to the meeting by doing the following sections before they arrive. For some who meet on Sundays or Monday, this will not be possible. As facilitators, come with an overview for those who are unable to do the work ahead of time - and know that the questions simply offer ideas and suggestions. Follow the Spirit's leading.

## our need to refuel

Pastor Doug began his message telling us about cars...and how it feels when we look down and the gas gauge is on empty. As his son lamented his need to continually put gas in his old clunker, Doug heard these words: *"I'm always on empty, and I hate the feeling of being on empty."*

Pastor Doug's main theme was the condition of feeling spiritually empty and how we can address that condition. Most of us have experienced that feeling of emptiness, but we are not without the ability to address that emptiness. In fact, as believers, our relationship with God is secure. And he gives us lots of insight into how we can grow our relationship with him.

To begin, think about the gas gauge in your car for a moment and envision your spiritual fuel level on that gauge.

*Where does your current spiritual well-being register? Are you feeling spiritually drained? Are you headed toward empty? Are you being filled up? Are you almost full? How would you describe your present spiritual connection with God and why?*

*How do you feel when you're running on empty? Journal words or phrases that describe what happens to you/your relationships/your life when you're not spending intentional time with God.*

*When you're feeling full or heading in the full direction, how would you describe yourself? Journal words or phrases that describe this condition. What is different about the two lists? Are there any similarities?*

*Would you say your current lifestyle keeps you more in a state of needing to refuel or a state of feeling full? Why?*

*If you're more in a state of needing to refuel, what would you say keeps you in that state?*

*If you're more in a state of feeling full, what would you say keeps you in that state?*

## in community with God

In order for us to be “refueled” or “filled,” we begin with coming to God. Only God can refuel. Only God can truly know who we are, where we are at the moment spiritually and what we need. We simply have to stop and open our hearts to the one who knows us fully and loves us unconditionally.

Prepare your heart to spend time with God’s full knowledge and love.

Read Psalm 139. Read aloud if possible. In this Psalm, David is nervous about God knowing him fully. He is unsure yet strangely comforted, fearful and yet wanting, pushed to run and yet pulled to stay. We can relate. We know that God knows everything, but we avoid that knowledge because we aren’t comfortable with that spiritual and emotional nakedness. (Recall Adam and his wife hiding in the garden from God, and you might just find us there as well.) We generally stay in the in-between world of busyness, quick prayers and brief sojourns into honesty, because it’s vulnerable in that alone-place with God. And something about that vulnerability causes us to hide. And yet we belong to God. We are his. He is our Father. Knowing us is his privilege. Knowing us is the fluid gift of his love. So begin to refuel this week by stepping in to God’s knowing presence.

*What is your spiritual condition right now?*

*What do you wish God to know or understand but fear sharing with him?*

*What do you sense that you need from God?*

Research a bit about David’s life. You can spend as much time as you have - it’s a fascinating story of God at work in one person’s...and a nation’s...life.

David as shepherd: 1 Samuel 16, 17

David as servant in Saul’s court: 1 Samuel 18-2 Samuel 1

David as King at Hebron over Judah: 2 Samuel 2-4

David as King at Jerusalem over all Israel: 2 Samuel 5-19

Unique moments in David’s life:

David defeats Goliath: 1 Samuel 17, 18:1,2

David’s sin with Bathsheba: 2 Samuel 11, 12

David’s repentance: 2 Samuel 12

David’s struggles with Absalom, his son: 2 Samuel 13-18

David’s final years: 2 Samuel 19-23

Now read Psalm 139 again; reading from *The Message* or an amplified version this time (see next page).

*From your perspective, what was David’s spiritual state as he wrote this Psalm? (Trace the progression you see unfolding.)*

*What do you learn about David’s relationship with God?*

*What can you learn about your own relationship with God? How does God see you? What does God offer you? What does this Psalm teach you about refueling?*

God, investigate my life; get all the facts firsthand.  
 I'm an open book to you;  
   even from a distance, you know what I'm thinking.  
 You know when I leave and when I get back;  
   I'm never out of your sight.  
 You know everything I'm going to say  
   before I start the first sentence.  
 I look behind me and you're there,  
   then up ahead and you're there, too—  
   your reassuring presence, coming and going.  
 This is too much, too wonderful—  
   I can't take it all in!

Is there anyplace I can go to avoid your Spirit?  
   to be out of your sight?  
 If I climb to the sky, you're there!  
   If I go underground, you're there!  
 If I flew on morning's wings  
   to the far western horizon,  
 You'd find me in a minute—  
   you're already there waiting!  
 Then I said to myself, "Oh, he even sees me in the dark!  
   At night I'm immersed in the light!"  
 It's a fact: darkness isn't dark to you;  
   night and day, darkness and light, they're all the same to you.

Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;  
   you formed me in my mother's womb.  
 I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking!  
   Body and soul, I am marvelously made!  
   I worship in adoration—what a creation!  
 You know me inside and out,  
   you know every bone in my body;  
 You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,  
   how I was sculpted from nothing into something.  
 Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth;  
   all the stages of my life were spread out before you,  
 The days of my life all prepared  
   before I'd even lived one day.

Your thoughts—how rare, how beautiful!  
   God, I'll never comprehend them!  
 I couldn't even begin to count them—  
   any more than I could count the sand of the sea.  
 Oh, let me rise in the morning and live always with you!  
   And please, God, do away with wickedness for good!  
 And you murderers—out of here!—  
   all the men and women who belittle you, God,  
 infatuated with cheap god-imitations.  
 See how I hate those who hate you, God,  
   see how I loathe all this godless arrogance;  
 I hate it with pure, unadulterated hatred.  
   Your enemies are my enemies!

Investigate my life, O God,  
 find out everything about me;  
 Cross-examine and test me,  
 get a clear picture of what I'm about;

See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong—  
 then guide me on the road to eternal life.

David, in Psalm 139, reveals not only his personal need for God, but his hatred for those who have hurt him or betrayed him or God in some way. We often leave out these verses, preferring the cleaner version. But David was a man who opened his heart to God. He didn't try to hide. God didn't need him to hide.

*Let God know if there are any anxious thoughts in you right now - any storehouses of unforgiveness, any unresolved anger, any struggles that you feel ashamed or embarrassed to share.*

Even after praying about his hatred, David asks God to search his own heart and remove his anxieties. God doesn't ask us to "clean up" before we talk with him - he asks us to be honest with him about every aspect of our lives and then invite him to transform us into his image.

As you close this time in Psalm 139, create a life-line of your own relationship with God. Draw a road. Start at the beginning. Indicate those times when you've experienced God showing up the strongest and those times when you've felt alone or unsure. Record key relationships, circumstances and experiences.

*What do you see as you look back over your life?  
 Where has God been? How's he been working? Where do you see his fingerprints in those key circumstances, experiences and relationships?  
 Is there a main theme or thread that runs through your life and, if so, how would you describe that theme?*

Prepare to share your journey with the group.

for missional communities not doing life notes

Spend a few moments at the beginning or ending of your time responding to the following:

*Choose a significant life experience or relationship and talk about how God has used that situation or relationship in your life to draw you closer to him.*

next week

To prepare for next week's sermon, pray for the ability to see Jesus as friend, read *Refuel* by Doug Fields and *The Cure* by John Lynch, Bruce McNichol and Bill Thrall.

Don't forget to email questions you might have to Pastor Mark at [markc@mission68.org](mailto:markc@mission68.org).

see next page for facilitator suggestions

facilitator suggestions  
in community with God's people

for the week of June 3, 2012

God comes to us individually to refuel us and he comes to us in community. Jesus was regularly refueled during time alone with his Father, and he was refueled during time with those he loved.

Begin by sharing around your community table:

*Where are you tonight? How are you feeling spiritually? What do you need from God? From this community?*

If your group had time and was able to complete a life-line, share the life-lines around the community. If your group wasn't able to create life-lines, share around the following questions.

*Share about a key experience or relationship in your life - maybe a turning point experience - and how God "showed up" in that key experience or relationship or worked good from that pivotal experience or relationship.*

After community members have shared, invite group discussion around the following:

*What do you learn from each other's life-lines or life experiences?*

*How does sharing about your life help create a greater sense of community?*

Conclude with this question:

*How does this community strengthen you spiritually? How does this community help you to refuel?*

Close your time by listening to Hillsong's "Forever Reign" together or reading the words that follow.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=au3EGglSYM0>

## Forever Reign

You are good You are good  
When there's nothing good in me  
You are love You are love  
On display for all to see  
You are light You are light  
When the darkness closes in  
You are hope You are hope  
You have covered all my sin

You are peace You are peace  
When my fear is crippling  
You are true You are true  
Even in my wandering  
You are joy You are joy  
You're the reason that I sing  
You are life You are life  
In You death has lost it's sting

[Chorus]

Oh I'm running to Your arms  
I'm running to Your arms  
The riches of Your love  
Will always be enough  
Nothing compares to Your embrace  
Light of the world forever reign

You are more You are more  
Than my words will ever say  
You are Lord You are Lord  
All creation will proclaim  
You are here You are here  
In Your presence I'm made whole  
You are God You are God  
Of all else I'm letting go

[Repeat Chorus]

My heart will sing  
No other Name  
Jesus  
Jesus