



Est. 2022/ Experience God | Doug Wekenman | 1.9.22

Weekly Study

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

Are you one to make a New Year's resolution? Why or why not?

SHARE

Happy New Year and welcome back to Group! This week, Doug started our new series *Established*. He said that “things don’t have to get easier for us to get better.” This is such great encouragement as we all jump into a new year, a new season with the sense of a fresh start. We know that when our faith is established, we aren’t going anywhere. And this begins with truly experiencing God. Whether we feel established in our faith or not, the invitation to experience God is always here and now.

Before we jump in, check in with each other by asking one of these questions:

Where did you see God in this week?

What is one way you were able to share in the work God is doing around you?

G R O W

Read Colossians 2:6-7

In the first part of this Scripture, Paul is speaking of salvation. In salvation, God establishes your new position of being in Christ, and when God establishes your position, it's a covenant, and there is nothing we have to *do* in order to receive or work for to keep remain in this position. That's good news friends! He goes on to say, "continue to walk in him, being rooted and built up in him and ESTABLISHED in the faith, just as you were taught and overflowing with gratitude." Two important words here that Doug highlights this week, *continue and established*.

Doug asked a question this week, "anyone can start something, but can you continue it?" We see this at the gym this time of year. It is a packed house and then come mid-February the gym thins back out to the "regulars". Why? Because the battle is in the everyday, in the continuing of what was started.

Are you one to have a New Year's resolution or start a project of some sort and stick with it? Why or why not?

It's easy to begin this Christian journey, but when hard things come in life and we don't see God or feel him near, will we continue navigating our faith in God? We must hold tightly to his promises believing that the fruit will come as we continue, because God is establishing something in us.

As we navigate what it means to be established in our faith, Doug encouraged us to implement these four Kingdom concepts in our life and the order matters: **Experience God. Find Family. Discover Purpose. Make a Difference.** As Doug said, "The more you experience God. The more you find family. The more you discover purpose. The more you make a difference. The more you get continue in those good motions, the more established you'll become in the faith."

Why do you think that order matters when it comes to these four Kingdom concepts?

Do you think you can experience God and not know your purpose or desire to make him known through making disciples? Why or why not?

MOVE

Read Acts 13:2; Matthew 17:1-8

We have been invited into a 21 day prayer and fast as a church beginning Monday, January 10. We believe that our time we are surrendering to the Lord through fasting and prayer, will result in us hearing from him! This is a time that we are dedicating to just sit with Jesus, to be with him and him be with us. Let us anticipate God to breathe life into our weary souls while speaking love over us. The invitation is to “come” to him, and we are accepting this invitation as a church family while anticipating God to show up as he will.

Have you ever set aside time to pray and fast prior to this? If so, share with your group your experience.

If you have not started the fast yet, it is not too late! Remember, there are four different options for fasts. In case you need a reminder, here they are:

Complete Food Fast: In this type of fast, you drink only liquids. Drink a lot of water, and then add in juice and shakes as needed.

Partial Food Fast: This fast is sometimes called the “Jewish Fast” and involves abstaining from eating any type of food for a certain period of time each day. For example, you can choose to skip a certain meal or abstain from eating until sunset.

Selective Food Fast: This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

Soul Fast: A soul fast is choosing something other than food to abstain from. If you don't have much experience fasting food, have health (or other) issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance, this is a great option for you. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

Whatever you feel God is calling you into, one way is not more “holy” than the other. God simply wants our affection, and this is a powerful way his people can come together and call on his name. We know that there is power when we truly seek God through prayer and fasting and we anticipate how God is glorified as we dedicate this time to him.

Because we believe that together is better, we encourage you to do walk through this as a group. Throughout the week, check in with one another. Send out a text thread encouraging each other with scripture, worship, or an emoji!

If you have already started the prayer and fasting, how is it going? Have you experienced God in a different way?

If you have not yet started, what are you hoping for during this time of prayer and fasting? If you have trepidation or hesitancy, share with your group.

Talk within your group about what you are hoping to experience during this time individually and as a group.

**Check out the website/app for the Est. 2022 “Prayer and Fasting Guide”*

P R A Y

As a group, take time to pray for our church, pray for your group and ask God to reveal his glory during this time dedicated to prayer and fasting.

T O G O

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. - 1 Corinthians 10:13