



Questions About Fasting

“Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?” (Luke 5:33).

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“Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? 15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast” (Matthew 9:14-15).

“And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? 19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days” (Mark 2:18-20).

“And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? 34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? 35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days” (Luke 5:33-35).

Differences in lifestyles and practices generates curiosity that often results in questions that can create opportunity for spiritual education and enlightenment, which could have been missed by uniformity and conformity. Obedience to God’s will always produce differences between the Christian and the non-Christian, as exemplified by these scriptures:

- 1) Isaiah 52:11 Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.
- 2) 2 Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I

“Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?” (Mark 2:19)

will receive you,

- 3) Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
- 4) Matthew 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.
- 5) Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

We must not be different just for the sake of being different or to display a holier than thou attitude, but in obedience to God. Also the difference should become opportunities for evangelism. “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15).

Jesus protected the disciples while answering the questions from the observers. His answer teaches us that:

- 1) Fasting, though commanded by God, and taught by Jesus (Matthew 6:17-18) was not suppose to be rigid routine and mechanical activity religiously carried out irrespective of the season or circumstances.
- 2) There is time for everything. What may indeed be an indispensable requirement in one season (Esther 4:15-17) could easily become a tool for satanic exploits and sin in a wrong time (1 Corinthians 7:5). Spiritual discernment is needed for right application.
- 3) With few exceptions, seasons of feasting and service may not be times for fasting.