

Why So Fast?

Understanding the Purpose
Behind **NOVEMBER**

Why So Fast?



- **Matthew 6:16** “And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. **17** But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, **18** that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

NOVEMBER

A time to **fast** and
pray together and
say **YES** to the
power of the Holy Spirit

Why So Fast?

- God's heart is for us to know and love Him and to enjoy our relationship with Him and know and share the fullness of life that He gives.
- The enemy's desire is to stop the above.

'the enemy'

- satan = Hebrew transliteration meaning adversary or enemy
- devil = derived from diabolos in Greek meaning accuser or 'one who slanders'
- Realise the lie you have come to believe
- Renounce the lie and identify it as untrue
- Release the lie and however you received it
- Replace the lie with the truth of God's word

Flesh

- The enemy will seek to twist the desires of our flesh
 - Money, power, sex, greed and so on...
- **Mark 4** Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. **2** And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. **3** And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” **4** But he answered, “It is written ‘Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Led By The Spirit

- We want to be led by the Spirit
 - We usually think of this in terms of spiritual gifts
- Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (Mark 4)
- Does God sometimes lead us into a wilderness in order to achieve for us a greater purpose?
- May we be led by the Spirit into November

Minds on the Things of The Spirit

- **Romans 8:5** For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. **6** For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. **7** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. **8** Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Walking in the Spirit

Gal 5:16-24 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh...

- Things of the Spirit ≠ Fruits of the Spirit?

... self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Power of the Spirit

- **Mark 4:13** And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time. **14** And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. **15** And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.
- His wilderness experience moved him from being 'led by' to being in 'the power of' the Spirit

Holding Fast...

- “Throughout scripture fasting refers to abstaining from food for spiritual purposes” (Richard Foster, Celebration of Discipline).
- Not for physical benefits (e.g. to lose weight)
- Not a hunger strike to hold God to ransom!
- Is between you and God
- Occasionally corporate (The day of atonement)
- Expected (Matt 6:16 – ‘When you fast’)

Fasting for a Purpose

- **Acts 13:2** While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” **3** Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. **4** So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

Present Purposes

- Many who are going through challenging situations
- Launching of new ministries
- The current financial situation for ECF
- The current political climate

Why So Fast?

- To overcome the flesh and grow in self control
- To increase reliance upon & intimacy with God
- To grow in the authority and power of the Spirit
- For specific purposes
- It is expected as part of a Christ-following life

How So Fast?

- Humbly; not seeking attention
- Individually or corporately
- Usually (but not exclusively) from food
- With correct motivation
- Making good use of the time to pray
- Led by the Spirit

How So Fast?

- A certain food/drink for the month
- A particular meal each day
- A certain day each week
- Something other than food that you 'rely' upon
 - TV
 - Social Media
 - Gaming

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