

Luke 5:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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?

Analysis

Why do disciples of John fast oft likewise Pharisees but thine eat drink. John disciples ascetic practice. Fast *nēsteuousin* abstain from food. Oft *pykna* frequently regular. Likewise *homoiōs* similarly. Pharisees religious fasting. But de contrast. Thine soi your disciples. Eat drink normal activities. Question challenges Jesus disciples lack of fasting. Jesus response bridegroom presence changes everything (vv. 34-35). Joy replaces mourning when Christ is present. After His departure they will fast. Reformed theology distinguishes old covenant preparation from new covenant fulfillment. Kingdom has come in Christ changes worship practice.

Historical Context

Fasting was regular Jewish practice. John disciples continued. Pharisees fasted twice weekly. Jesus disciples did not fast while He was present. Not that fasting wrong but inappropriate during celebration. Jesus is bridegroom His presence is wedding feast. After ascension early church practiced fasting (Acts 13:2). But fasting is means not end. Can become empty ritual. Reformation recovered proper understanding fasting is spiritual discipline not meritorious work. Modern church some neglect fasting others make it legalistic requirement. Balance needed.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What does bridegroom analogy teach about appropriate times for fasting versus feasting?
2. How should Christians practice fasting as discipline without making it legalistic requirement?

Interlinear Text

οἱ δὲ εἴπον πρὸς αὐτόν Διατί οἱ
the disciples And they said unto him Why the disciples
G3588 G1161 G2036 G4314 G846 G1302 G3588

μαθηταὶ Ἰωάννου νηστεύουσιν πυκνὰ καὶ δεήσεις
the disciples of John do often and prayers
G3101 G2491 G3522 G4437 G2532 G1162

ποιοῦνται ὥμοιώς καὶ οἱ οἱ Φαρισαίων
make likewise and the disciples the disciples of the Pharisees
G4160 G3668 G2532 G3588 G3588 G5330

οἱ δὲ σοὶ ἐσθίουσιν καὶ πίνουσιν
the disciples And thine eat and drink
G3588 G1161 G4674 G2068 G2532 G4095

Additional Cross-References

Luke 18:12 (Parallel theme): I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

