

Day of prayer and fasting

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Date: 06 January 2019

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[0 : 00] I don't know what you think our greatest need is. As a church, what is our greatest need? Well the answer to that, if you know your Bible, is your greatest need and my greatest need is God.

And that's one of the reasons why we have the day of prayer, particularly why we're having a day of fasting. I preached a similar sermon to this before, about four years ago, on fasting. But I want us to think about it again.

And because on Friday, we all have a day to encourage each other and to experience this blessing. The blessing of repenting of our sin and seeking for the living God, more than anything else.

It's absolutely vital that we as a church understand what fasting is. There are lots of myths and lots of misunderstandings about what fasting is.

Usually when I've talked about it with other people, they say, well yeah, it would be good to lose some weight, wouldn't it? But it's got nothing to do with losing weight. And there are all kinds of misunderstandings about what fasting is.

[1 : 09] So the first thing I want you to notice, it will run from morning to evening. For one day. I know there's Lent. Some of you are into Lent. I'm not in any way, shape or fashion.

Jesus fasted for 40 days. He didn't give up chocolate. And we are going to go from morning to evening. And then we'll eat together with a feast at 7 o'clock. And have a time of worship and teaching and the Lord's Supper.

And the morning to evening fasting happens at least twice in the Bible. The whole church does that. Joshua chapter 7. And that's one of the occasions when the church is defeated really.

And they are faced with this non-Christian world. They're at a place called Ai. And they can see we're never going to win. We're never going to win unless the Lord is with us. And so they fast.

And so we'll spend a day, morning to evening, seeking the Lord. And they did that in Joshua chapter 7 because they knew they needed God. And that they couldn't win anything without him.

[2 : 11] So again, Judges chapter 20, the church leaders. That seemed to get the church members to do a fast from morning to evening. Because the church was divided. And they were saying, we need the Lord to come and sort us out.

And to help us. We need him. So they did a day like that. They were seeking the Lord. And they didn't know how much they needed the Lord. So they took a day to fast.

Nehemiah, he fasted in concern for the building up of the church. Nehemiah chapter 1 and verse 4. And then in Esther chapter 4 and verse 6. The whole church.

The whole church across the whole world. Had this massive fast. But they fasted because they needed the Lord. They needed him. How much do we need the Lord?

And that is what this day is about. As it raises the question, why fast? Why fast? Why is it in the Bible? Why does Jesus say, when you fast?

[3 : 16] Not if you fast. He assumes, Jesus does, that you will fast. What is it for? Well that is what we are going to look at. And we want to take this day on Friday.

To call on the living God together. Because we are desperately concerned. We are desperately concerned about our own lives. And this church family. And this area that we live.

And we need the almighty God. We need the power of God. We can't do it. And believe it or not. You cannot reach one person. And neither can I.

We need God to show up. And to give the victory. That is why we are doing it. Without him. We can do nothing.

We fight, don't we? The Bible tells us. Against strongholds of darkness. We have no power. And he has all the power. And we need to learn that.

[4 : 17] And we want to learn that. How much we need the Lord Jesus. We need the Lord Jesus more than food. More than anything else.

The living God. Must be our greatest desire. And we want to share the bread of life. The living water. With all the spiritually hungry and thirsty people here.

In Ealing and Furthering Field. So this morning. I want you to see that Jesus himself fasted. Why did Jesus fast? And then warnings. On how not to do fasting.

And then I'll remind you what's going to happen on Friday. So number one. The first point. Jesus himself fasted. The fact that the Lord Jesus fasted. Is really foundational. It is very important. We wouldn't do it if he hadn't. Done it. He shows us the way. Whatever are the reasons for fasting. The Lord Jesus needed to fast. And the Holy Spirit.

[5 : 15] According to Matthew chapter 4. Drove him into the wilderness. For an extended time. Of fasting. Before Jesus could begin his work. Of preaching. And healing. And teaching. And in Mark 1 verse 5.

The Spirit drove him. As if the Holy Spirit was saying. Right. The first thing we've got to do. Is fast. Now even the Lord Jesus fasted.

Why does he need to fast? Is there something important? The Holy Spirit drives him up. This deep time. Of fasting preparation. So come with me. To Matthew chapter 3 and 4. And let's think about. Not what just happened. When he came out of the wilderness. The fast. But what happened immediately. Before. And he had this encounter. With John the Baptist. John the Baptist. The Baptist. Is baptizing.

Lots of people. And that leads into the fast. And we need to think about that. John the Baptist. Is calling all the people. Of all the world. To come and get washed. Come and get washed. Because God is coming.

[6 : 13] We're going to save our lives. And he was talking to everyone. Not just religious people. But irreligious people. Pagans. And people came from all over the world. To get baptized by John the Baptist.

He was saying. God is coming. And our lives are filthy. And our hearts are filthy. And our minds are filthy. And you and I. We need to get washed. Because God is about to come.

And he preaches. And when you read the preaching. Of John the Baptist. It's terrifying stuff. Isn't it? It is not seeker sensitive.

It is not warm and fuzzy. It is not entertaining. He says judgment day is coming. And he says the living God. Is coming with an axe. And he's going to cut down.

Everything that isn't pure. And clean and ready. God is coming. Everyone needs to wash. And repent. And turn away from what is sinful. And unclean. God is coming.

[7 : 09] And you can imagine. As John was preaching. That it must have been terrifying. To have heard it. He was the greatest of all the prophets. I don't know if he actually had an axe.

As he preached. The prophets did that sort of thing. Didn't they? And it was terrifying. And sinful people. Like you and I. If we've got any self-awareness. At all this morning. We will be able to say. Yes I'm dirty. My conscience is dirty. I'm ashamed of what I've done. I'm ashamed of what has been done to me. I feel ashamed.

And I need to be washed. And so people in their droves. Were coming. Into the water. And they were facing up. With all their messed up lives.

And all their shameful secrets. And as that is happening. John the Baptist looks up. And who is in the water. But the Lord. The God man.

[8 : 05] Is in the water. He's in the water. With all those messed up. Sinful. Dirty people. Isn't that amazing? Isn't it incredible. That the living God. Came.

And got into the waters of repentance. Because that is what they are. They are waters of repentance. To turn away from sin. And the God man.

Has. Got into the water. To turn away from sin. With all the sinners. And all the dirtiest. And all the most shameful people. Can you imagine the look on John the Baptist's face?

It says. This is. In a glorious understatement. That John. Tried to deter him. He must have said. Get him out. What are you doing?

You're not part of this. You're different. You don't want to be touching all these dirty sinners. Get out. You shouldn't be in the water. You don't need to be washed. You've got nothing to repent of.

[9 : 03] You are the pure and perfect Lamb of God. You don't have anything to repent of. That day. There were people there. And they were spiritually depressed.

There were people that couldn't lift up their eyes. They just felt wretched. There's things they'd done. And said. And imagined. That they felt sick. When they remembered them. And they'd come to that water.

And they think. That axe is going to cut me down. God must hate me. God would not want anything to do with me. There's no point in me being in this water. You can't wash away what I have done. God. And at that moment they realise. It is the God man. Who is in the water. With him or her. And he's saying.

I'm here. I'm with you. Let's repent together. Can you imagine that scene. We're with.

[10 : 04] Are we. John the Baptist. Aren't we. What's he doing. Jesus can't repent. Jesus is perfectly clean. He is the holy God. And yet. He is in the water of repentance.

With sinners. How can he repent. He's got nothing to repent of. Which is true. But the Lord Jesus is making clear. Isn't it. That he was going to be one of us. Really one of us.

And he would take our mess. And our shame. And all that is worse about us. And he was going to take that upon him. As if it were his own. He took my sins and my sins.

And he made them his very own. And he washes with the water of repentance. And he's washed with us. He would repent. Of sin. And of selfishness.

And shame. As if he were you and me. As if he'd done everything. That you and I have done. He would repent of that. As if he'd done the bad. And the shameful things.

[11 : 06] Now John the Baptist. I do think he is this moment of recognition. He knows that this man Jesus. He is the Lamb of God. Who takes away the sin of the world. So he probably gets it.

He gets that you are taking on the sins of the world. Of course that is the right thing to do. Of course you are being washed. As the one who has taken on the sin of the world. Jesus had never done anything wrong.

He'd never thought anything wrong. He'd only ever done exactly what a human being should do. He'd loved the Lord his God. With all his soul and mind and strength. And all his heart. And he loved his neighbours himself.

And yet his love for us. For messed up people like us. Is so great. That he took on our sin. As if he had personally done it.

And he repented of it. And he got washed in the water with us. He confessed his sin. And he got washed in the water as a sinner. It wasn't the first time he'd done it. If you know the Psalms.

[12 : 05] You'll know that the Messiah. That Christ prays in the Psalms. Repentance for sin. On behalf of his people. Nehemiah does it. In chapter 1. He repents of sins.

That he hasn't done. But he takes responsibility. It's all in the Bible. But it is a shock. Isn't it? It is a shock. When you realise what he's doing. He bears our sins. And he carries our sorrows.

As if they were his own. As if he were the worst sinner of all. And that is what is going on then. And yet.

If you think that is strange. What happens next is he's a stranger. Because when the Holy One of Israel. Was standing in the water of repentance. As if he was the sinner. Being washed. As if he were covered in moral dirt.

And shame. And grime. Then the heavens open. And the Most High God. The Father in the Highest Heaven. Shouts down. Isn't he brilliant? Isn't he wonderful?

[13 : 04] That is my son. Look at him. Look at him. Look what he's doing now. He's in the water. With the worst people in the world. Isn't he brilliant? I love him. I delight in him.

Everything he does. Is better than I could have dreamed. Look at him now. Isn't he fabulous? That's why I love him. And that's why you should listen to him. And that is why he's the answer to everything. Look at him now.

Repenting with sinners. That is why he shouts down. From heaven. It's as if the Father cannot keep quiet at this point. He's so thrilled at this moment. That he's. If I can say it reverently.

It's like he's saying. Well I don't normally do this sort of thing. Speaking out loud. I usually leave it up to him. But I've just got to say something. It's so brilliant. It's such a brilliant moment.

That the people who feel the furthest away. He's got his arms around. And then the Holy Spirit. He visibly comes down from heaven.

[14:04] And he wants people to know that he is involved. He wants to see this is the one. This is the one. I give all my power to. And my gifts to. And my energy to. And he is doing the work.

That I have given him to do. Look at him. And the Father wants everyone to know. And the Spirit wants everyone to know. That he is the one. Right here and right now.

Doing this repentance with the worst of sinners. How can any of us feel. That we can't come near to God this morning. When Jesus is there to embrace us.

Why is that so important for you to grasp. In preparation for fasting on Friday. Jesus the eternal son. Who the father utterly loves. The most loved by his father.

When he was repenting of sin. In a river full of dirty sinners. With messed up people like you and me. That's when the love of God. Was publicly and visibly. Shown so powerfully. He's about to go on this 40 day fast.

[15:05] And all the way through the Bible. The first step in the process of fasting. The first step is that of deep repentance. Where we come to God. And we say to God. My heart has been captured by sin.

And by selfishness. And by shameful things. And my heart and my desires. Have gone away. After things which are worthless.

And I need to turn away from that Lord. And I need to repent. And I need to be washed. And that is the first step in fasting. All the way through the Bible. Repentance. To say no to all of that.

No to all the things that have captured my desires. But yes to the living God. And that is what Jesus does. He's about to begin his fast. The first thing he does is this.

This repentance with sinners. The first step was that. But it was in that time of repentance. That the love of the Father.

[16:04] Was so strongly expressed towards him. And the Holy Spirit was poured out upon him. As if he needed to repent. As if he was the same as them. But he does it.

And doing that in the waters of repentance. The Father publicly shouts his love out. And the Spirit visibly comes down upon him. I love him. But I love him now.

When he's in the waters of repentance. This is my son. Isn't he wonderful? God says I am delighted in him. Now more than ever. And so when we fast. One of the key foundations.

Is to confess our sin. Is to face up to really where we are. And the way that our desires have gone off. And we've loved things. More than the one who made the things.

We've loved food. More than the bread of life. To face up to them. And to be honest with God about that. About our mess. And about our hard hearts. And our close minds. And our lack of love for each other.

[17:07] And the world our own. It's time to speak of our need for cleansing. It's time to be honest. About how we mess up. To speak of shame.

And guilt. And bitterness. And deceitful desires. That grip us. And maybe you've never done that.

And maybe you worry. That you can't speak about those things. Maybe there's things in your heart. And you don't want to face up to them. And you say they're too bad.

And they grip me too much. And I don't actually want God to know about it. I don't want to speak about those things. Particularly on a fast day. A fast day is a holy day isn't it? It's a day of joy.

I don't want to dwell on my sin. And my deceitful desires. That will put God off. Won't it? If I'm honest about the mess that I made. Then God will think. That's awful. Why are you even talking to me?

[18:09] On this day. We might think that. Sin and shame. And confessing our sin and shame. Will put God off. Will push him away. But the truth is no.

The truth is that when we confess our sin. When we are honest. About our need for cleansing. When we say. I am messed up. And I have deceitful desires. And they control me.

And actually I hate that Lord. I want to tell you about the things that I've done. The things that I've said. The things that I've watched. The things that I've fantasised about.

And I want to be set free from all of that. Then God will be appalled at us. No. Not at all. No. He will love you more than ever. How can he?

Because that is the kind of God he is. He loves sinners. And God loves it. When we repent. And come to him. The power and the presence of the living God.

[19:11] More than ever. We'll know. And the Lord Jesus. Began. By showing us. That it's completely safe. To get into the waters. It's completely safe.

To be honest. With the living God. John the Baptist has said. There is a judgment day coming. And that axe is going to come on all of you sinners. But Jesus got in the waters. And did he come with an axe?

There is a day. When there will be a judgment day. But he says. If you get in the waters of repentance. I'll join you. And the axe won't fall on you.

The axe won't fall on you. Let it fall on me. Come and be honest. Come. And speak about who you are. And what you've said. And what you've done. And what you've watched.

And what you've thought. And what you've desired. And what you've fantasised. It's safe. God says. I'd love you to do that. And that's how we begin. Well that's what happens.

[20 : 10] And as soon as Jesus comes out. In that time of washing and preparation. And fasting. This preparation for fasting. The Holy Spirit sent him. Drove him into the wilderness. For 40 days. It's a long time isn't it? It's a time of no food.

But Jesus did drink water. It's important to be aware. That in the Bible. Normally. A fast means no food. But you can drink water. Plenty of water.

There is of course. Isn't there? You may know. The example of Moses. He went for 40 days. With no food and no water. So he's kind of off the charts. He went to Sinai. And into the thick darkness. And then he comes down. With the stone tablets. And there's those kind of. The golden calf. And all that stuff. And he smashed them. And then he goes up. And he does another 40 days. Without food and water. He was showing us.

He was up in the heavenly realms. He's saying. If you are that close. With God. In the heavenly realms. From the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To the rivers of life. Then you don't need food and water. That's Moses.

[21 : 09] Let's leave that there. But in the rest of the Bible. You don't have food. But you do have water. There may be people here. This morning. Who are diabetic. And you just say. Well I can't cope with that.

I need to be careful. There's. Those who maybe. Never done it before. I can't do a whole day. Well maybe you can do breakfast. If you can't do breakfast. You can do lunch. Elevances.

And you need to be careful. Or maybe there's people. People who are diabetic. And you go to diabetes.org.uk. There's really good stuff on there. On fasting. In Daniel 10.

Verse 2 to 6. Daniel went for three weeks. On a limited kind of fast. He ate veg. Drank water. You might think. Well. I can do that. There's Jesus.

He fasted for 40 days. And at the end of it. We're told that he is hungry. And that is when the devil. Gave him the first temptation. So let's focus on one. Let's go to chapter 4. Matthew. And verses 2 to 5. Why did Jesus fast?

[22 : 12] After fasting. 40 days and 40 nights. Jesus was hungry. Well. No surprise. And the tempter came. And said to him. If you are the son of God. Command these stones. To become loaves of bread. But he answered. It is written. Man shall not live.

By bread alone. But by every word. That comes from the mouth of God. What does fasting do? Fasting teaches you. That you need the word of God. More than anything else.

And that we need God. More than anything else. That's the purpose of fasting. Our desire for food. Can be very strong indeed. If I preach long enough. Your desire for food. Will be very strong indeed.

And if we don't eat food. We will eventually die. Not as quickly as we think. We say. I'm starving. I'm dying. We're not. We can go for weeks without food.

I can eat a horse. We vastly overestimate. Don't we? The importance. Of our hunger. And our desires. And our appetites. And one of the things.

[23 : 10] That fasting does. Is to say to you and I. Settle down a little bit. They're not that important. They're not that important. Your need for the word of God.

Is more important. Do you know. It would be better. To never eat again. Than to miss out on the word of God. It would be better. To die of starvation. Than to miss the living God.

And that's what it reminds us of fasting. We think we can't manage without food. But when we fast. It reminds us. Actually we can manage without food. For quite a long time. More than food.

You and I need the living God. And we need Jesus. And it's not only the appetite for food. That comes to the surface when we fast. When we fast. We find that all sorts of desires.

Come into perspective. We might think that our desires. They are just too strong. For us to control. There may be all sorts of sinful desires. And appetites. And we think.

[24 : 06] Well I can't deny that appetite. I can't deny that desire. And a fast teaches us. That's not true. That we're not ruled by. Disseal desires. We think we can't say.

We can never say no to them. But fasting shows us. That Jesus will teach us to say no. To our deceitful desires. Even now. In the here and now.

Fasting is about learning. That the most powerful desires. And appetites I have. I don't need to obey them. But I do need to obey him. And when we fast.

And the devil. And our own flesh. Tells us to go and get a snack. Or to go to McDonald's. Or to get a bowl of pasta. That pasta. At two or three in the afternoon.

How are we going to answer? We can answer as Jesus answered. No. I don't live by bags of crisps. Or Big Macs. Or bowls of pasta.

[25 : 05] Even though I can't stop thinking about them. I don't live by them. I don't live by them. Or any other desire. Or appetites. Or all my bodily appetites. Constantly crave satisfaction. But I know. They never give me satisfaction.

Because only the word of God. Can give me true life. And true satisfaction. I want God. More than any other desire. From the flesh. Or appetite of the body. Maybe that's what we'll cry out.

And we need to remember. We need to remember. To be able to say. And ready to say. I don't need these things. I don't live. For those things. I live for him. He is the one.

Who I live to. He's the one. In whom I live. And move and have my being. And I get real satisfaction. From him. Because food. Never ultimately satisfies me.

Does it? And when Jesus. Spoke these words. About living by bread alone. He's quoting from. Deuteronomy chapter 8. And Deuteronomy 8. Chapter tells us. That the Lord. Brought his people.

[26 : 02] Into the wilderness. To make them hungry. He took them to a place. Where they couldn't get. Food. To make them hungry. Hunger can be a discipline. In the hands. Of a holy God.

Deuteronomy 8. It speaks about testing. To see what's in our hearts. Because when we're denied. Our appetites. And can't fulfill our desires. Well.

What comes to the surface? You see. It stirs things up. Doesn't it? When we're denied. When we're hungry. From a craving. It stirs things up. And you and I. We'll see.

What we really desire. What really is in the depths. Of our hearts. Do we really love him. And trust him. Or actually. Is it. A bowl of pasta.

Or a snack. That means more to us. Than Jesus. Or we'll find out. That's what Deuteronomy. Chapter 8. Teaches us. Do we believe. That in the end. True satisfaction. Can only be given by him.

[26 : 58] And it's better to say no. To all my desires. And all my appetites. Because I don't really believe. That they'll ever give me satisfaction. But he will. For all eternity.

Do you believe that? Our flesh demands satisfaction. It craves it. The life of this passing age. Pleasure and food and treasure.

But the word of God. Promises us. That he's taking us. To a new creation. A future beyond this dying body. He promises you.

A future when your deepest desires. Will be fully met. Do we believe that? In these times of hunger. Are times when we can face up.

To the issue of trust. Do we trust him. To satisfy us. Even when our flesh. Cannot get what it wants. Will we say in the end.

[27 : 53] Well no. My flesh must come first. I'm not going to deny my flesh. No we say. Even if my flesh fails. Even if I never get what I desire. He is my true life.

My true satisfaction. We discover it. In Deuteronomy chapter 8. That the Lord God. Took them into the desert. To discipline. To make them face up. To the deep question. What is more important.

Food or Jesus. And if I'm hungry. Will I grumble against the Lord. And if my desires aren't satisfied. Do I grumble against him. Or will I rejoice in him.

Whether I have nothing. Or whether I'm full. Jesus is enough for me. Will I rather die of hunger. Than miss out on him.

Well I want to say to you. You can't answer that question. If you've eaten a big Sunday lunch. So Jesus began his work. With repentance and fasting. And he showed us. It's safe to do it. That is the way.

[28 : 48] To know the love. And power. And presence. Of the living God. To repent and fast. And seek him above all else. Fasting has showed us. That nothing matters more.

Than the word of God. Thirdly. And quickly. One of the mistakes. That we might do. As we fast on Friday. You remember in Matthew 6. And in Isaiah 58.

Jesus said. When you fast. Don't look somber. As hypocrites do. Because they disfigure their faces. To show that they're fasting. And he links. That teaching. With religious hypocrisy.

Don't fast. So that others can see. You're doing it. And you want to make. Sure others know. That you're doing it. I don't like to brag. But I give a lot to charity. It's the best people don't know.

Is it? Whose attention do you need? Jesus already told us. If we're trying to get praise. And respect. From other human beings. Then our majestic.

[29 : 43] Father in heaven. Has got no interest in us at all. So we either look to him. As the unseen father. We either look to him. For our value. Or we look to other people. But we can't do both.

It's either him. Or others. But you can't have both. And fasting is something. That may well make you feel ill. And tired. And a headache. And cold. And hungry.

And maybe even a little bit depressed. And irritable. And miserable. All that is when Jesus said. To the hypocrites.

Do you want to know. You're feeling all those things. Do you want other people to know that? Why? So the people say to you. Oh. You're on a fast. Aren't you? That's brilliant. Don't do that. Make it obvious.

That no one knows. That you're on a fast. No one knows. That you're on a fast. Do everything you can. So that it's hidden. Because if it's hidden from them. It's seen by the father.

[30 : 40] And if it's known to them. It's hidden from the father. You can't have it both ways. The temptation will be. On Friday. To let everyone know. About your symptoms of fasting. So they will be. Impressed by your heroic self-efforts.

I'm so hungry. I'm fasting today. I'm really. I'm really struggling with my fast. I'm finding it a real challenge. This fasting. But it's okay.

My burning zeal. For righteousness. Sustains me. Let me post on Facebook. To update everyone. Jesus. Cuts through all of that. Doesn't he? He says. Make sure you look good on Friday.

Freshen up. Have an upbeat mood. No matter how angry you feel. Don't mention it. To everyone. So that it won't be obvious. To human beings. But it will be known. To your father. So on Friday.

Let's not go on at one another. When we see each other. How are you doing? I'm starving. I can murder a bird. Couldn't you? I can't wait for tonight. It's no good.

[31 : 39] Let's not speak about ourselves. On this day. Let's focus our attention. On the bread of life. The one we really desire. Fix our eyes. And minds. On him.

And encourage one another. To desire him. And to forget all that other stuff. And of course. Jesus acknowledges. We might feel pretty gross. When we're fasting. And that's why he gives us. This advice.

People sometimes say to me. I find fasting really helpful. Because it helps me concentrate. On the Bible and prayer. I've never found that. And in fact. The Bible never says that. In fact. You will find it harder to concentrate.

If you have no food. And that's important to face up to it. It's not actually. So that you will concentrate better. No. It's that you'll say it. I cannot live one moment. Without you Lord. That's what it's about.

Fasting. It's not about earning merit. With the living God. But it's about dealing with our hearts. And our minds. It's not about what it does to God. As if we're twisting God's arm. Behind his back. But what fasting does to us. It gets to the root of our hearts.

[32 : 39] And our desires. And it forces you and I. To find out. What are our true cravings. It's nothing to do with dieting. Or weight loss. There's a man who went to his minister.

And asked him to pray. Could you pray that I lose lots of weight. And the minister said. This does not come about without much fasting. But that's not the point. We're seeking the living God.

It's not about health benefits. It's about eternal benefits. The body is going to die. No matter how much you fast. But you get an eternal perspective. To think about how you use your body. It's not trying to improve yourself.

It's when I forget myself. And say Jesus. And his way. And his truth. And his life. Are all that matters. In Isaiah 8.58. The Lord sees his church. And that they do fast. And that they go through

rituals.

And they do all this stuff. But it's just a ritual. And a duty. And they're sort of expecting God. To kind of give them extra blessings. We've done all this fasting. Lord you owe us. And the Lord says. That is not the kind of fasting.

[33 : 36] I'm interested in. It's rubbish. Why are you doing it? It's for yourselves.

I'm not interested in it. But if you're doing it. Out of love for others. Out of love for me. Then life will come. Why are we doing it?

Why bother? Because we cannot see one person saved. We cannot reach Ealing, Hanwell, Greenford without it.

We cannot plant a church at Neffsbridge without it. We cannot put sin to death. Our own desires lead to destruction. And we want those desires put in their proper place.

And we want to feast on Christ. And so during the day we'll try and send you Bible verses. And the Lord will deal with each one of us in specific ways. But our great overall prayer is that the Lord God would be glorified.

[34 : 41] For the Lord Jesus will be lifted up. And then we'll break our fast. And we'll rejoice. And we'll sing. And we'll hear God's word.

And we'll celebrate the Lord's Supper. Let's pray. Let's pray.